JACK'S BACK!!

A CONVERSATION WITH
KING KIRBY!

★

PLUS: PAUL POWER
OF TV'S "BOB"
TALKS TO
CHIC STONE
BILL STOUT
STEVE RUDE
MIKE ROYER &
TONY SALMONS
IN AN ALL-STAR TRIBUTE!

★

#121

DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT'S

COMICS INTERVIEW

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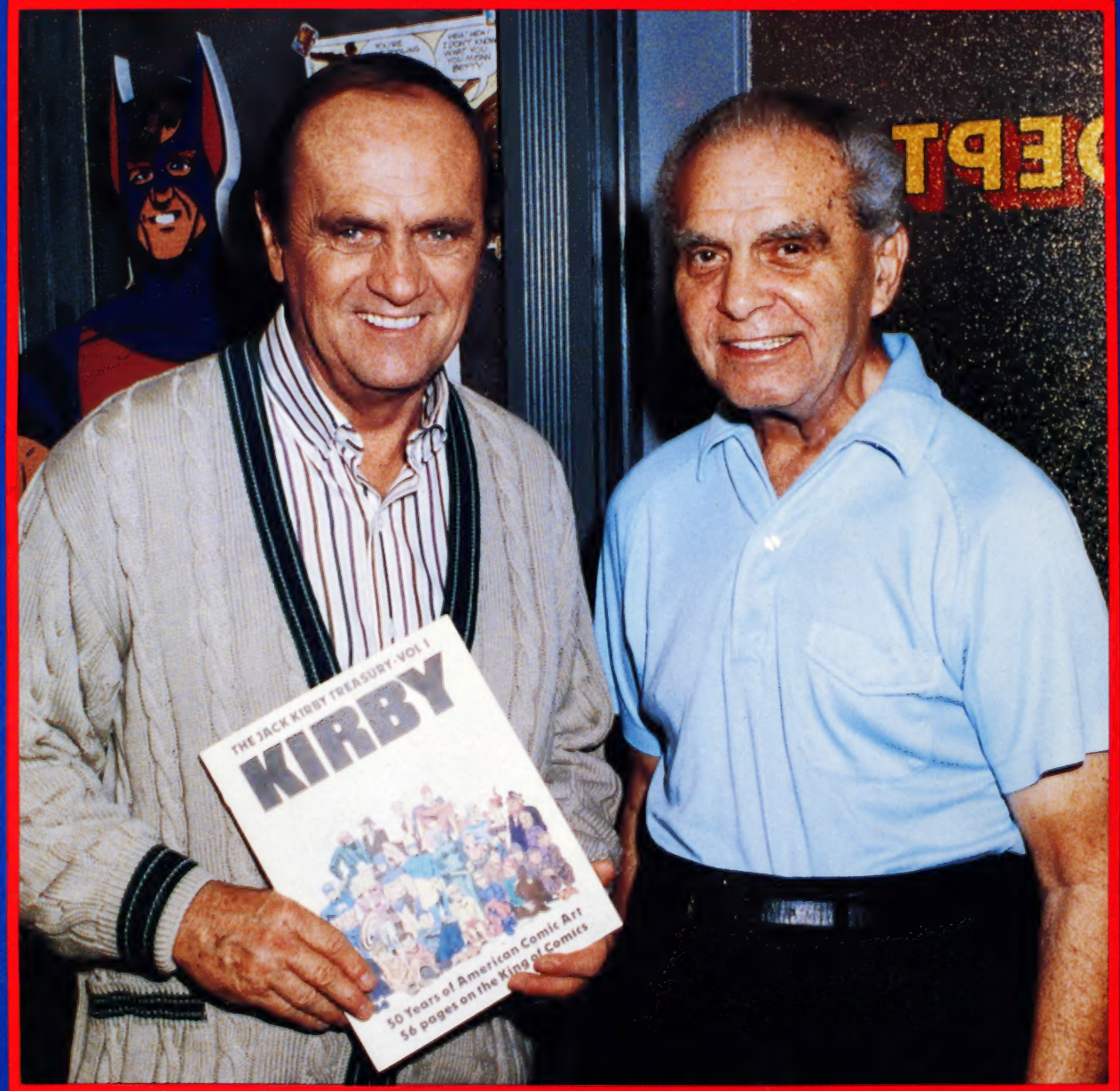

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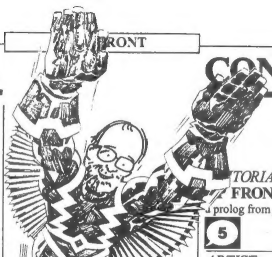
cover:
TV's BOB NEWHART
& comics' JACK KIRBY
two living legends



DAKbolt

UP FRONT

The art of **Jack Kirby** reconverted me to comics. When I saw an advance shot of the cover for AVENGERS #4 printed in an issue of SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED magazine, I began haunting the newsstand — and that ignited my enthusiasm for Marvel Comics, which eventually resulted in my joining the Marvel Bullpen in the mid-'70s. Thus it is that I, and so many others in comics, owe a debt of gratitude to the King. This issue, we pay tribute, thanks to **Paul Power**. Take it away, Paul.

—DAK

Ga'day! As you thumb through this book you'll hear and see my fellow cartoonists and I reflect on our love for the King of the Comic Books, **Jack Kirby**. The man is a genius — period!

It gave me great pleasure to interview the cartoonists in this book. I'm speaking of **Mike Royer, Tony Salmons, William Stout, Steve Rude**, and that master of the sable brush, **Chic Stone**.

Recently I was asked by writer/producer **Shari Steinkellner** to ask some famous cartoonists to appear on BOB, the TV show I draw for and appear on. Now, it was great to get the likes of **Marc Silvestri, Jim Lee, Mel Lazarus, Bob** (BATMAN) **Kane, Art Thibert** and **Sergio Aragones.** But the thrill was to get **Jack** and **Roz Kirby** on the show — and that was me sitting next to them on the episode titled "You Can't Win," which aired on CBS January 29, 1993.

If you missed it, don't worry — just watch BOB on CBS Monday nights — it'll be on again. Our producers and I wanted Kirby all along. We spoke about that episode in my job interview. (I'd like to thank that "Gloved One" **Michael Jackson** for suggesting me for the job.) It's my/our way of showing America how comics are done with a tongue in cheek. And our small way — like these interviews — to pay tribute and thank the King.

Cheers, mates. And a big thank you to the San Diego Comicon and **Jackie Estrada.**

— Paul Power

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"You know, people like da Vinci were masters, of course,

Richard Kyle ©1971-93

The Mister, Captain America, Fin Fang Foom, Fantastic Four, Mole Man, Devil Dinosaur ©1993 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. / Mister Miracle and Orion ©1993 DC Comics, Inc. / Illustrations from "Silver Code," Secret City and Phantom Force ©1971-93 Jack Kirby

but they would only have them paint in one vein."

JACK KIRBY

The following interview was conducted at the San Diego Comic Con by Italian correspondent Claudio Piccinini, editor and publisher of MARVEL SERIES NOTIZARIO — known as MSN — but according to Claudio, "don't let the name confuse you! At first, we were a monographic magazine about Marvel, then we evolved into a publication about all *genres of comics."*

As for the conversation with Jack, "I'd never seriously considered visiting Los Angeles, but the remote possibility of meeting Kirby pushed me to make the decision. It has been a dream come true. The only Kirby interview that I liked was yours in COMICS INTERVIEW #41 and now ... my own Kirby interview!"

So, without further ado, a conversation with the King ...

JACK KIRBY: I was wondering about Italian comic artists. You know, people like **da Vinci** were masters, of course, but they would only have them paint in one vein. There was nothing adventurous; theirs would only be the religious vein. But today all that has broadened and I was wondering whether it's happened so in Italy, then. Are they futuristic, too?

CLAUDIO PICCININI: *It depends, because there's a lot of different kinds of comics in Italy. It's not like here, where there's the superhero genre which is predominating. There's an enormous variety of genres. I brought for you issues of recent Italian comics. These are the most popular ones. They are in black and white.*

JACK: *(Looking at MSN)* Well, yours is a beautiful publication, too!

CLAUDIO: *Oh, thank you!*

The Watcher (in pencil) by Mr. Kirby — circa 1970.

"There's a difference between cartoon and

JACK: It's really well produced.
CLAUDIO: *This one is a funny animal comic called LUPO ALBERTO. It's—*
JACK: Oh, I see, like Krazy Kat! *(Laughter.)*
CLAUDIO: *Yes, it's inspired by the great American classics.*
JACK: This is beautiful. They have a lot of character, a very simple character, and you have a lot of movement with cartoon characters. There's a difference between the cartoon and the adventure story. What I did, like in Captain America, I would combine them both. In Captain America there were the arms that collided with the panels. He'd fight five or six guys at one time, and one guy would fly out of the window, another would roll under the table, and he had a welcome for four other guys. *(Laughter.)*
CLAUDIO: *Are you still working? If so, what are you doing?*
JACK: Oh, well, what I've done is a reprise of the stuff I did years before. What I'm doing now is lithographs of my past works which are going to be published. I think there are two other people

adventure stories. What I did was combine them."

who are working on my biography, and so, through these other biographies I think people who are interested in comics may get my version of what comics really meant in my time. They will go back to the 1930s and the '40s, and you may get a picture of the early enterprises that were in progress at that time.

CLAUDIO: *Where did you and Joe Simon get the idea for the character of Captain America? Cap was a definite symbol of America, compared with the other "Big Two" characters of the Golden Age — Superman and Batman — which were simply heroic figures.*

JACK: Well, it was done in very patriotic times. Europe was a turbulent continent, **Hitler** was grabbing one country after another, and America was getting angrier and angrier at all this. It seemed to me, reading the newspapers, that in time, America itself might be his goal, and of course, it was a very scary time. But it was a time when you could express your own wishes and your own sentiments over the few victories over **Hitler** by doing your own adventure strips.

From the pages of publisher Richard Kyle's ARGOSY #2: "Street Code," a graphic story, recreating the lost world of 1920s New York (an autobiographical piece by Jack). This entire story is reproduced in its original graphite beauty — Mr. Kyle's idea.

I, as a very, very young man, was able to do that, so, in conjunction with **Joe Simon**, who was my partner at the time, we created Captain America. C.A. not only symbolized America, he symbolized freedom. He symbolized free will, he symbolized the human being as he wants to be. Certainly human beings don't like to be manhandled, and of course that was going on all over the world. It would be in America sooner or later. Remember, I'm speaking now as a very young man, and these things were happening all about me. My sentiments were combative in nature, so Captain America had to be born. He had to go after these fellows, would fight those who enslave people or would try to, just in general, give them a bad time —

CLAUDIO: *And a few years later you went to the war, too!*

JACK: Yes, I was drafted, and I was with **General Patton** and I saw what was happening at the time. I had to liberate a concentration camp. I was near Metz. Metz was our objective, but it was a large regiment and I was in the Fifth Division at the time. If you remember, it was the Fifth Division that took Bastogne and retook the northern part of Czechoslovakia. And **Hitler** had all these countries under his power and of course I saw, I myself saw the signs of human abuse. It saddened me, and angered me and I thank the good Lord that he saw me through times as terrible as that.

CLAUDIO: *Captain America, when you created him, was a symbol for the readers, an expression of the qualities of man and of the "American Dream." Do you think today there are characters of equal strength and temper? What do you think, for example, of a character like the Punisher?*

JACK: I've never read a Punisher story, although I do get the books, which are wonderful to look at and marvel at. This is because I look at the books as a publisher would. I look at the kind of reproduction they get.

CLAUDIO: *The Punisher is a kind of violent character that perhaps represents well the times in which we are living. Personally I don't like it at all —*

JACK: I don't like the kind of violence that we experience now, and I can tell you

"The Newsboy Legion was a reflection of my environ-

that as one with first-hand experience with it. That kind of thing is not only denigrating to the human being, it's fearsome to the individual. There should come a time when all this may pass away and we find more constructive things to do as countries and individuals.

CLAUDIO: *I was asking because there are two or more magazines dedicated to the Punisher and Marvel Comics is publishing a lot of Punisher material. It's very successful and there are a lot of readers who appreciate his stories.*

JACK: Oh, I see. Well, I don't particularly follow his adventures but, as I said before, I envy the Punisher and his fellow characters in the Marvel books because of the fine reproduction.

CLAUDIO: *The new format. It's well printed.*

JACK: The format is very good and the paper is wonderful and I envy the young people who are able to work in that kind of an atmosphere. Comics now are well printed, but actually in my day it didn't matter, because the stories were just excellent and I can tell you that the writers and artists that I knew were all fabulous people. I think it would be fair to speak of them as an integral part of the industry. I mean, the fact that they've built the industry, they helped build it.

CLAUDIO: *The Marvel Age was created by the artists and also by the readers.*

JACK: Yes, the artists had a rapport with the readers and certainly that didn't hurt the publisher, because it increased circulation. And what the artists and the writers were doing at the time was building up all this circulation. That's how comics grew for everybody in the industry, because we all benefitted from it.

CLAUDIO: *The years 1942-43, during which you and Simon were working for DC Comics, was one of the most creative and prolific periods of your career, and it's almost totally unpublished in Italy. What do you remember in particular of that period? That was when you created the Sandman, the Guardian and so on.*

JACK: These were characters which, in my personal view, had to be created because, speaking for myself, my background was so limited and I had to reach out and find out how big the world was, and how different the people were from where I lived. And my environment was so restrictive that I became an avid movie goer in order to see the rest of the world. I couldn't afford passage on a boat, I couldn't afford passage on a plane. I was a very young man who certainly didn't live in an environment of money, so there was no way that I could travel to see for myself what the world was like.

CLAUDIO: *So you did it in fántasy?*

JACK: I was doing fantasy, I was doing movies, my comics became movies.

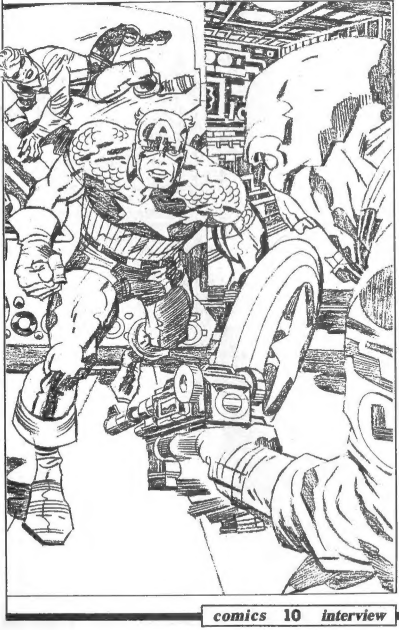
CLAUDIO: *Yes! I think so.*

JACK: And of course those movies became a source of ... rather they became a *part* of my own personality.

And later on **Joe Simon** and I would be together to talk over stories and talk over illustrations and we would walk the New York streets, walk by open-air newsstands. I don't know how many there are left, but the newsstands always used to be out in the open. And there, hanging on the newsstands, were love magazines, and we would pass by these magazines every day, you know, and give them no notice whatsoever, because we were so busy talking about adventure stories.

Suddenly there I was one day, the magazines were hanging out of the newsstands, and we had to stop for traffic, so we began to look about us, and there it was staring us right in the face. "Love, love, love!" And Joe and I suddenly realized that there were no love maga-

Uninked pencils from the past — featuring Bucky, Captain America and the Red Skull (circa 1970).



ment. I knew kid gangs because I lived among them."

zines in the field. We created YOUNG ROMANCE, MY OWN ROMANCE, MY DATE —

CLAUDIO: *That was in the 1950s.*

JACK: Yes, and it developed into deeper stuff, but certainly it was real, because it dealt with real people, with families, and were as discreet with the subjects as we could be. They sold very well. We were the first ones to really deal with romantic comics.

ROZ KIRBY: When did you do Sandman? Before or after the Newsboy Legion?

CLAUDIO: *I think the Newsboy Legion came later.*

JACK: Yeah. I think they came later.

CLAUDIO: *Because there was the concept of the teenage sidekick that was extended to the kid gang.*

JACK: Well, the Newsboy Legion was a reflection of my own environment and I knew kid gangs all my life because I lived among them. And of course we would be fighting and chasing each other over fences, over fire escapes, and this went on every day. Speaking for myself, it was a reflection of the years I spent in New York's Lower East Side.

CLAUDIO: *I've read about a story of the Newsboy Legion, "The House Where Time Stood Still" (STAR SPANGLED COMICS, June, 1943) where the Legion met two elderly brothers who had been living like hermits in an old mansion in the heart of the city. Four years later newspapers reported the similar case of the Collier Brothers, who had lived for 20 years in a strange mansion in the heart of New York City, conducting a hermit-like existence. Was it a simple idea or had you somehow heard of these strange brothers through the grapevine?*

JACK: Ah, yes. I did a story similar to the life of the **Collier Brothers**. They came from a very rich family; however, they neglected their own lives and they lived in sheer poverty. These were people with access to a better life which they never took advantage of, and of course, Joe and I conceived a similar idea to the **Collier Brothers**.

CLAUDIO: *In other stories there is also a sort of premonition of historical facts of that period.*

JACK: It's strange, but my mind was a very active mind, and it continuously searched for situations I'm not saying that I *sensed* the **Collier Brothers** actually existed, but I felt a situation like that could possibly be real. Not that I was searching for those brothers themselves, but I worked on a story like that and brought it into existence. I felt that this would be a very novel idea, so I produced the stories before the brothers came into public knowledge. My mind was continuously searching for plots.

CLAUDIO: *What kind of experience did you have in World War II? You'd just created Captain America and your characters had just left for the front. While you were serving in the Army, were your comrades aware of that? Did some of them read comics?*

JACK: Oh, yes, my lieutenant. My lieutenant read CAPTAIN AMERICA. I was in a regiment where I'd been designated as a scout, and so I would go ahead of the regiment. I didn't relish the idea after hearing what was going on ahead. I felt that I would like to do what **Bill Mauldin** was doing. If you remember, at the time **Bill Mauldin** was a cartoonist who was actually sketching in the front lines, sketching the soldiers and sketching the action. But I'd have to get my orders from my first lieutenant.

"Well," I told my lieutenant, "do you know who I am?" and he said, "No, who are you?" I said, "I'm the fellow who does CAPTAIN AMERICA! I shouldn't be up here, I should be out there like **Bill Mauldin**, drawing only action as the regiment comes forth!" *(Laughter.)* And my lieutenant said, "You know, you're right. I read all your stories. I think they're great!" He said, "You shouldn't be up here; you're a valuable guy and you'll probably give the story of the regiment to the outside world." He said, "But nobody is supposed to know we're here, so your stories won't get out

And still older, is this pencil sketch from the late '60s, which was used as the centerpiece of a popular fanzine.

"Americans think in terms of teams — and that is

anyway, and so it doesn't matter." *(Laughter.)*

"What you'll do is go into action with the rest of us," he told me. And so I did, and it was very traumatic, I can assure you. There are many times when I don't sleep very well. I was on Normandy Beach ten days after the invasion, and I was standing out, the first one out of LST (Landing to Surface Transport), and I still see it in my dreams, where the front of the boat slops down, and I was the first one out on the beach, and what I saw on that beach … I can't describe. Sometimes when I do dream about that, I stay up the rest of the night.

CLAUDIO: *What do you think of Fredric Wertham? His attacks on comics in the '50s had a devastating effect.*

JACK: Oh, yes! Well, I felt that he didn't see comics as they truly were, as an American form of art, and that's the way I viewed comics. I think that **Wertham** always felt that — since we were young people — we didn't have the background to tell a full story without being censored.

CLAUDIO: *What were you doing at the time? When SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT, the book, came out?*

JACK: Oh, I think we were doing romance stories.

CLAUDIO: *So you didn't have problems with the censorship!* (Laughter.)

JACK: Yes, but they never bothered me. I felt that I would always be doing what I wanted to do, that this is America, and this is what a man was supposed to do.

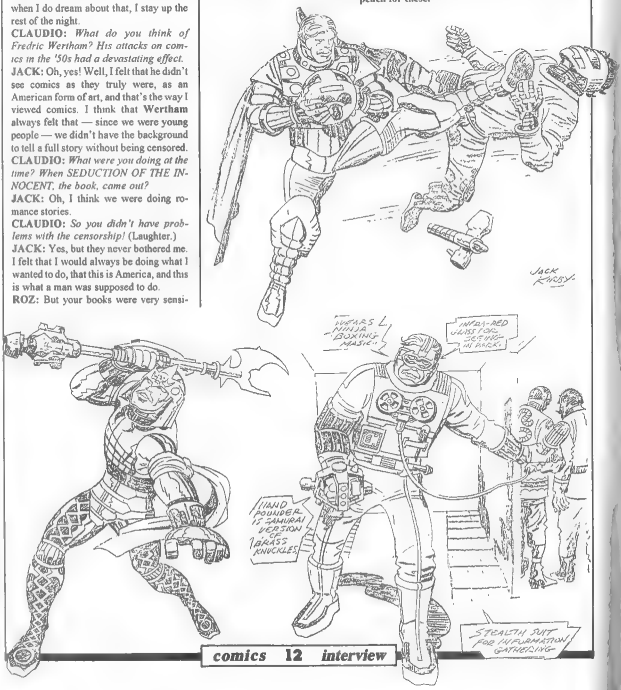
ROZ: But your books were very sensitive, very delicate.

JACK: Because I respected all my characters, I respected the women, I respected the men, and I would give them fair treatment in any kind of convoluted story; and so my stories were *good* because people saw reflections of themselves in the stories.

CLAUDIO: *What was the source of inspiration for the CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN? Were they forerunners of the FANTASTIC FOUR?*

JACK: Yes, they were in a way … They were a team, and Americans think in terms of teams — baseball teams, football teams, hockey teams — and all that is reflected in comics. In comics we have action teams. Now, an action team has a lot more leeway than, say, a hockey team. A hockey team can only play one game; an action team can play any kind of game, with any kind of villain. We have a

Various "idea/concept" sketches for, among other series, Topps Comics' SECRET CITY. The creative team consists of Roy Thomas and Walt Simonson. Jack used a pencil for these.


JACK KIRBY
HAS A NINJA BOXING MASK!
INFRA-RED LASER FOR SEEING IN BACK!
HAND HOLDER IS SAMURAI VERSION OF BRASS KNUCKLES
STEALTH SUIT FOR INFORMATION GATHERING

Original pencil cover for Jack's PHANTOM FORCE #1 — now being published by Image. Many will contribute to this series: Rob Liefeld, Todd McFarlane, Erik Larsen, etc. This comic book was to have been one of the many cornerstone publications for the never-realized Kirby Comics. McFarlane will be inking this cover. The deal with Image was made after this interview was conducted.

"I wouldn't like to define a horror wound by

broader field in which to tell a story and it gives enough room to tell very, very interesting stories

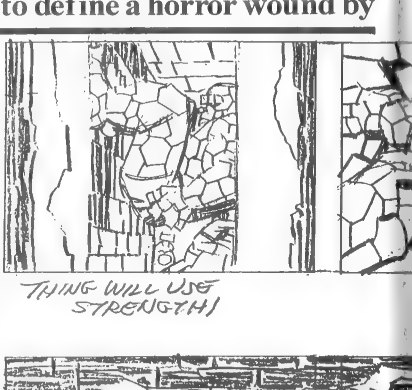
CLAUDIO: *Until the 1960s, comics dealt with the subject of Communism as a foe to beat, as a personification of chaos, of evil. Fighting American was born as a satire in the middle of the Cold War. How did you have this idea?*

JACK: Well, speaking for myself, I felt the situation was .. serious, of course, but certainly it would resolve itself in time, and I approached the strip with a satirical view. For instance, there was a character called Super-Khakalovitch, and the Russians gave him a cheap costume. *(Laughter.)* It all built out from the fact that he wanted a better costume, and of course fought Fighting American because Americans made their costumes of good material. At the end of the story, the Russian character wound up in Greenwich Village with a lot of girls and he felt a lot better about the entire adventure.

CLAUDIO: *When you worked on monster books in the late 1950s, you created monsters which were mysterious, intriguing, but never horrible or disgusting. In the modern kind of horror the inclination is to put in evidence disgusting and bloody things. Where do you think the modern version of the monster came from?*

JACK: It's because all that horror and gore was fed to the younger generation when they were very young. They grow up to that kind of thing and of course, my opinion is that they don't think it's as horrible as we think it is, and so they accept that more. I, personally, wouldn't like to take a horror theme to excessive lengths. I wouldn't like to define the horror wound by wound, or drop by drop of somebody's blood, as they do today. They've got to be very graphic with it. I don't like that kind of approach. My approach is that the human imagination is good enough to define all that by itself. I can do a story about Dracula, without showing Dracula actually puncturing some guy's neck. But today, if they did a picture about Dracula, they would show his teeth going to some guy's neck, when it was never necessary to do that. You can still make an excellent picture of Dracula. There are pictures remembered by uncounted audiences.

CLAUDIO: *I was really surprised when I read the interview you did with Gary Groth in COMICS JOURNAL #134. If Stan Lee was really an office worker, who created characters such as Daredevil, Silver Surfer or even the Amazing Spider-Man, after you graphically designed them?*



JACK: I did

ROZ: That question is too particular. There's too much conflict.

JACK: Yeah, I'd like to dodge that question if it's okay with you.

CLAUDIO: *I was asking because we Italian readers have always thought of you and Stan Lee as authors of the Marvel series of the 1960s . . .*

ROZ: Let's put it this way. Jack created the stories, gave them to Stan Lee. He sent him the story complete, because I used to send it out. Then, on the side, he would tell Stan Lee what the whole story was about. We got the pages down, and then, what Stan would do, he would put them in words.

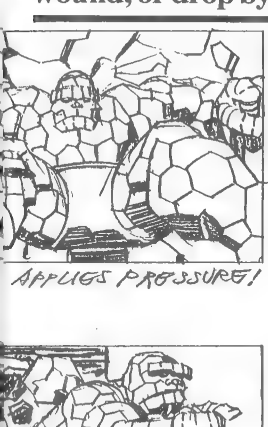
JACK: Yes, he would put in the dialogue. The story was already there.

CLAUDIO: *Of course, because if you drew it, it has got to be there!* (Laughter.)

JACK: I had no script. I was never given a script. What would happen was I would do a sci-fi story. I would come in, I would tell Marvel what it was gonna be like, and what the story was about, and I told them when they would have the story and I worked very hard, because you can draw a script and not write it at the same time.

CLAUDIO: *The conclusion of the Orion and Darkseid saga happened in*

wound, or drop by drop of somebody's blood."



Pencil storyboards by Jack from the DePatie-Freleng cartoon in which the Fantastic Four met the Mole Man.

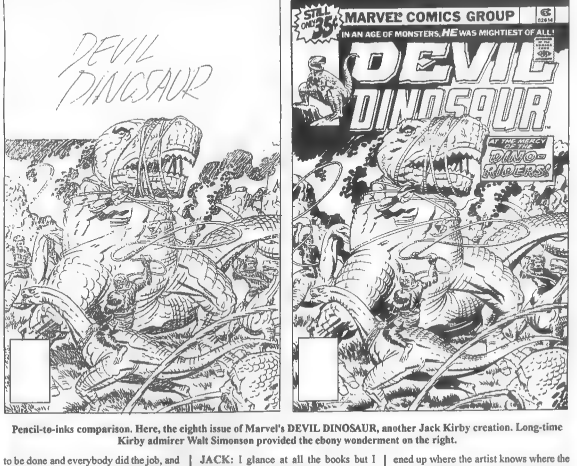
the last issue of the reprint of the NEW GODS, and in the graphic novel THE HUNGER DOGS, in a conciliatory and quite positive way for Orion, who's married the angelic Bekka

JACK: I think that was a fortunate thing, because the relationship between Orion and Darkseid is a difficult relationship. He was a villainous father with a wonderfully good son. Of course, they were an opposite answer of the human relationship, so they never saw eye to eye. But there was one thing that frustrated Darkseid, the way I saw it, in the relationship. A father would never, never injure his son. Surely it's one thing a father can never do, and so Darkseid was frustrated. Darkseid could eliminate people by the thousands, but in his own heart he knew that he could never kill his own son. And that was the situation. It was a very, very human situation, and I think it's part of this that made the NEW GODS a success, and it continues running away, because it continues from that very same human angle. And if you're a good storyteller, I think it's a wonderful story to tell.

CLAUDIO: *Getting back to Marvel, I think that nowadays there are really few titles with the right spirit that distinguished the Marvel series in the '60s. With those stories you defined this spirit and this style, which today is too frequently absent in Marvel Comics. Today it has become too much of a business. Could it be possible to go back in some way?*

JACK: Yes, but I'd keep the business in it. I think a good artist can work with a good publisher on a good business basis, but each one of them must be protected in some way. Each of them. The publisher has rights, and the artist has rights, and these rights have to be established. In the old days the rights were nebulous. The artist never knew where his rights began. Well, there was a nebulous line which we couldn't define and, of course, the job had

ROZ: "When Jack was doing FANTASTIC FOUR,


DEVIL DINOSAUR
STILL ONLY 35¢
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
IN AN AGE OF MONSTERS, HE WAS MIGHTIEST OF ALL!
DEVIL DINOSAUR
AT THE MERCY OF THE DINO-RIDERS!

Pencil-to-inks comparison. Here, the eighth issue of Marvel's DEVIL DINOSAUR, another Jack Kirby creation. Long-time Kirby admirer Walt Simonson provided the ebony wonderment on the right.

to be done and everybody did the job, and somehow the business end of it never came under discussion.

ROZ: In Jack's time, when he was doing the FANTASTIC FOUR, artists had to ... they were left alone, they wrote all those stories, their artwork, and they had all this freedom. Now it's a conglomerate, so much big business. One makes the drawings, one inks, one letters ...

JACK: Yes, it's a different way of doing things.

ROZ: Right. There was more joy for them to work then. I don't think there's a way to go back to the old times.

JACK: I don't think so. I don't think they know how, really.

CLAUDIO: *Although I also love the "Fourth World" stories, the FANTASTIC FOUR are still my favorite characters. What do you think about the way characters you created are treated nowadays? Are you displeased when their psychology is perverted? What do you think, for instance, of the way John Byrne handled the relationship between the Thing and Alicia?*

JACK: I glance at all the books but I don't read them, you know, on a continuing basis. I glance at the work and it's a beautiful work. I love the kind of work **John Byrne** does. I take it for granted that he's a very competent writer, because **John Byrne** is a thorough, complete professional, so he probably did an excellent job, excellent writing job. If the book is enjoying success, I can understand that, because **John Byrne** was a part of the team that produced the book.

CLAUDIO: *In Italy we've heard indirectly about the original art controversy between you and Marvel. Could you explain in a short way what happened?*

JACK: There was always trouble with getting original art back, and finally I did get some art returned, and of course I was grateful for that

ROZ: We've had to fight for that for many years and we've spent a lot of money.

JACK: Yeah. We fought for many years because legally the artist and the publisher shared a nebulous relationship. Somehow that situation has to be tightened up where the artist knows where the share is and ask to be formalized in some way. The artist and the publisher have to have a legal as well as a formal relationship. The fellows get their artwork back now, and there are big changes in the industry which certainly were missing for years.

CLAUDIO: *Did they conserve old art?*

JACK: No, as I know. I don't know what they did with the art —

ROZ: Some was taken, some was stolen, some was given away. They went to the warehouse and took a lot of original art.

JACK: And so you see a lot of it being bought and circulated by people who shouldn't have it.

CLAUDIO: *So you had back a very small quantity of your art.*

JACK: A small quantity, but considering the work I did for the various magazines, I can tell you that it entailed maybe hundreds of thousands of pages because it was over a long, long period.

CLAUDIO: *If we take a look back and consider the "Men Behind the Comic-book Industry" we could observe that*

artists were left alone. They had all this freedom."

the main names are of Hebraic heritage. Besides you there are Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster, Martin Goodman, Larry Lieber, Harvey Kurtzman, William Gaines, Julius Schwartz and others. Do you think the Jewish cultural heritage, traditions and imagination could have had some kind of importance in the birth of the superhero figure?

JACK: Well, I can say one thing, that the Jewish voice somehow came from a storytelling heritage. I can only speak for the Jewish voice.

ROZ: Like **Will Eisner, Bob Kane** —

JACK: Like **Will Eisner, Sam Higher**, his partner, are certainly part of that and we're part of the storytelling heritage. Our parents would tell us stories constantly. I would question my father, I would question my mother, my aunt . . . God rest her soul, she loved me deeply and she would tell me stories about the old country and the legends from here. And as a young man, in the Lower East Side of New York, which was a very rough place, I can tell you that kind of thing captured your imagination and kept you on a very straight course, because you won't do anything to anger your mother, or anger your father. In fact, I remember even the gangsters and the cops would have their mothers and fathers who are sacred to them. If a gangster heard somebody saying something about someone's mother he would go to the cops to turn the guy in!

CLAUDIO: *You've often said you'd have liked to work in the movies, and that comics had been almost a forced choice. If you could do something in the movies, what kind of story would you like to create?*

JACK: Well, I like good drama. I don't think you have to be seedy or denigrating or graphic, too graphic in telling a good story. In other words, if a man is stabbed you don't have to show the dagger and pain in his body, you know, you don't have to go to the —

CLAUDIO: *Today they put a lot of importance on the visual side* —

JACK: Okay, but if you were to do a picture about the guillotine, if you had a scene in which a man has to be executed that way, would you actually like to see the blade in the guy's neck?

ROZ: That's what they do now!

JACK: You know, it's the kind of thing they do. They would show you possibly something that was akin to a very real execution and — of course — I think

Real-life comic-book greats guest starred as themselves on an episode of BOB in which MAD DOG was among those nominated for the annual comic-book awards. Left to right are Sergio Aragones, Mel Keefer, Marc Silvestri and Mel Lazarus (back row) and Jack Kirby, Paul Power, Bob Kane, Bob Newhart and Jim Lee (front row).

12:45 P.M. NOV. 22, 1963 -- JACK RUBY LEARNS OF THE ASSASSINATION IN THE NEWSROOM OF THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS WHERE HE HAS GONE TO PLACE AN AD FOR HIS CLUB AND WHERE HE COMPLAINS ABOUT AN ANTI-KENNEDY AD...
STUNNED, RUBY GETS ON THE PHONE AND CALLS ANDY ANDERSON AND EWA TENDER AT HIS CLUB, THE CAROUSEL.
ANDY, IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, WE ARE GOING TO CLOSE THE CLUB. I'LL SEE YOU IN ABOUT HALF AN HOUR.
THEN HE CALLS EVA GRANT -- HIS SISTER, BUT SHE IS UPSET.
JOHN, I AM NOT OPENING TONIGHT. I WILL HAVE TO LEAVE DALLAS.
1:15 P.M., RUBY GOES POSSIBLY TO PARKLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WHERE NEWSMAN SETH KANTOR CLAIMS TO HAVE SEEN HIM...
1:45 P.M., HE ARRIVES AT HIS CLUB.
CALL EVERYONE AND TELL THEM WE'RE NOT OPENING.
ISN'T THIS A TERRIBLE THING? RALPH, I CAN'T OPEN. YOU SHOULD CLOSE YOUR PLACE TOO!
I KNOW HIM! I KNOW HIM!
LATER AT A DALLAS WOMEN'S STORE, RUBY TRIES TO BUY $25 OF NORTH...
RUBY ARRIVES AT HIS POLICE HEADQUARTERS...
RUBY THEN PLACES A CALL TO THE NEWSPAPER TO CHANGE HIS AD...
I DON'T CARE WHAT THE OTHER GUYS ARE DOING. I WANT TO SCOOP THEM.
AT LEAST FIVE NEWSMEN SEE RUBY...
NEXT TO THE POLICE CHIEF'S OFFICE AND ACT AS A SPOTTER FOR THE PRESS.
LOOKING FOR A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TWO MEN, FBI AGENTS BEGIN TO PIECE TOGETHER RUBY'S MOVEMENTS...
SATURDAY, RUBY LEAVES HIS APARTMENT AND SOON ARRIVES AT DEALEY PLAZA WHERE AGAIN, HE ACTS AS LOCAL ASSASSINATION BUFF, TALKS TO REPORTERS...
THAT'S CAPTAIN FRITZ AND CHIEF CURRY OVER THERE LOOKING AT THE FLOWERS.
RUBY'S NEXT STOP IS AT SOL'S TURF BAR. HE SHOWS THE PICTURES OF THE "WARREN" JOB...
I KNOW WHO TO GIVE THESE PICTURES TO. I WANT IT TO BE A SCOOP.
THEN HE CALLS STATION KLIF...
I UNDERSTAND THEY ARE MOVING THE PRISONER TODAY. YOU LIKE ME TO COVER IT? I BELIEVE I CAN GET SOME NEWS...
9:30 P.M. NOV. 25. RUBY CALLS HARRY MEYERS, A FRIEND IN CHICAGO...
AROUND MIDNIGHT HE GOES TO THE PANIO CLUB, SITS DOWN AND ORDERS A COKE...
SUNDAY, 8:30 A.M. RUBY'S AWAKENED BY A CALL FROM THE CLEANING LADY. HE'S CONFUSED...
HE TAKES A SWIM IN HIS APARTMENT HOUSE OUTDOOR POOL.
DURING THE LONG'S ANSWERING SERVICE, RUBY PACES THE FLOOR, MUMBLING...
RUBY STRIPS OFF 339 FT. AND 6 INCHES TO THE POLICE STATION...

"46 Hours and 36 Minutes in the Life of Jack Ruby," a little-known comic strip for a '60s issue of ESQUIRE magazine by Jack Kirby.

"Captain America...a manifestation of true spirit of Americans."

that's horrifying, I mean that's really horrifying! It can be employed as dramatically as producing the real thing.

I would do any kind of a story in the movies, and I'm particularly fond of the French Revolution. I'm particularly fond of the European in general, because my roots are in Europe. My father came from Austria. I, myself, was in Europe and I saw a variety of people there, and I began to see the various cultures. I began to get a better picture of the French, even of the Germans as people. I began to know all these people and that was an experience. There I was experiencing the future development of good stories

ROZ: This producer who called was putting out a new movie, and he got all Jack's comic books in front of him, where there's a lot of action, and he said they couldn't distill, that they couldn't get the feeling that Jack has, so they wanted him to sketch out the movie —

JACK: I could do that if I was part of the production team. If it's so you would get that kind of action, I think the audience would enjoy it, but I don't think one man can reproduce exactly what is in another man's mind and heart.

ROZ: Like in the CAPTAIN AMERICA movie —

JACK: It was never released. However, Captain America was a manifestation of the true spirit of Americans. The Americans, as I've always seen them, were active, respectable, imaginative, and they were helpful to others. I — as an American — I've always been proud of the country and its people. I've always loved its society.

CLAUDIO: *So what's in the works?*

ROZ: Maybe your novel will be finished, maybe you'll finish it in twenty years! *(Laughter.)*

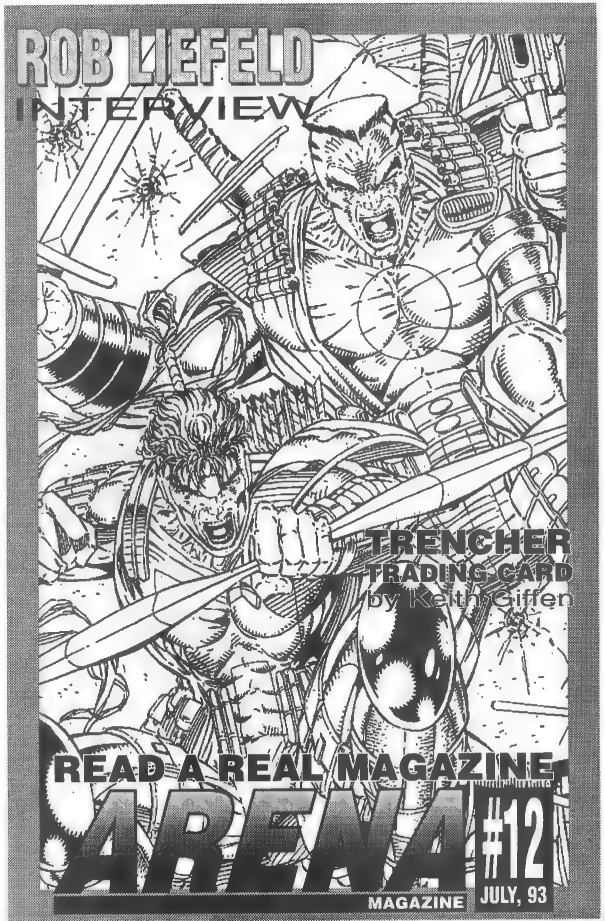
JACK: I've been working on this novel and I put it down, I work on it, and put it down, all for a variety of reasons, but it's a very good novel and I hope to —

ROZ: It's not about comics.

JACK: No, it's not about comics and I hope to finish it very soon. She's gonna drag me to finish the book

ROZ: You started it in 1974. You've got to finish it! *(Laughter.)*

Rare pencils for CAPTAIN AMERICA #200, 1976 — later inked by the late Frank Giacoia.



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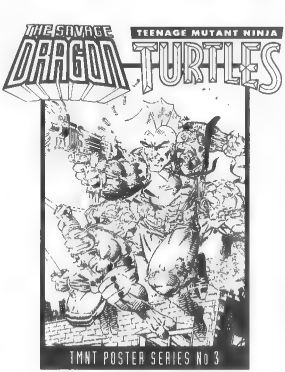
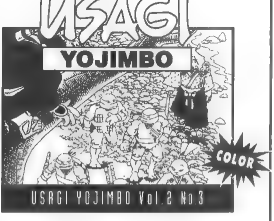


ERIC LARSEN & MICHAEL DOONEY

EASTMAN, LAIRD, LAWSON & AIKEN WITH COVER BY A.C. FARLEY

SHIPPING IN JULY!



STAN SAKAI, COLORS BY TOM LUTH

"Jack's work is easy to ink. I think any

Extremely interesting "recreation" collage by Chic, made up of various magic moments during the "Marvel Age of Comics." Among the sources are covers to FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL #1 and JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #120. Can you name the others?

CHIC STONE

A LEGENDARY TRIO

STAN LEE • JACK KIRBY • CHIC STONE •
WRITER PENCILLER INKER

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decent inker could handle the job?"

CHIC STONE

Chic Stone with interviewer Paul Power (of the BOB television show).

'm speaking with Golden Age veteran inker, artist and cartoonist, Chic Stone. Chic was, of course, the mainstay inker for early Marvel and inked Jack Kirby from 1963-1965. He then moved on to American Comics Group where he co-created the Nemesis character. Chic's credits are much too numerous to detail here, so I'll let Chic fill us in as we go . . .

PAUL POWER: *When did you first get started in the business?*

CHIC STONE: Well, we'll have to go back to 1939, I guess; back then I worked for **Will Eisner** and **Jerry Iger.**

PAUL: *And was Kirby working there at the time?*

CHIC: No, not if I remember correctly. Jack started working in 1940 or 1941.

PAUL: *What were some of the features you worked on back then?*

CHIC: I was only 16 years old at the time, so I had all of the menial tasks, like pasting up and whiting out, stuff like that. I basically got the artwork ready for the printer.

PAUL: *Was there a pretty big bullpen back then?*

CHIC: No, actually, it was just myself. I worked on JUMBO COMICS and SHEENA.

PAUL: *What was the first feature that you did?*

CHIC: The first thing I recall doing was a strip for **Ed Gleason** and **Charlie Biro.** It was a strip that ran in the center of CRIME COMICS and BOY COMICS. It was a sports strip that I did for six months and that was how I broke in. That was back in the 1940s. I worked a lot with **Bob Wood,** who was a fantastic, wonderful person to work for.

PAUL: *Who were the cartoonists that influenced you the most?*

CHIC: Alex Raymond, C.C. Beck, and **Milton Caniff** all had an influence on me.

PAUL: *You actually worked for Caniff at one time, didn't you?*

CHIC: Well, when I was young I used to go up to the NEWS building on 42nd Street and I would cut the Strathmore/Bristol board paper for some of the syndicated artists up there.

PAUL: *Did you ever show them your work?*

CHIC: Sure, all the time. I would get my work critiqued by them. They would tell me what I was doing wrong and ways in which I could improve. Milton was always very generous in those ways.

PAUL: *You also worked with C.C. Beck on Captain Marvel?*

CHIC: Right, I sure did, back in the '40s — before I was drafted into the army. I was drafted in 1942 and served in the infantry. We went into France eleven days after D-Day.

PAUL: *Hell of a way to get some cheap French wine!* (Laughter.)

CHIC: It was quite an experience for a young artist to go through, that's for sure. It was a little rough.

PAUL: *What did you do after you returned from the war?*

CHIC: We were supposed to come back from the army and still have our jobs with Fawcett. Unfortunately, **Beck** had left the company and was freelancing out in Englewood, New Jersey, where he set up a studio. When we got back we had to go to Englewood if we wanted any work. Traveling from New York to Englewood was quite a job in those days.

PAUL: *Did you like working on the Captain?*

CHIC: Yes, I did. It was a great experience. I did pencils and inks on that book. I worked about a year on CAPTAIN MARVEL.

PAUL: *I remember my first exposure to your work when I picked up FANTASTIC FOUR #28. I thought that your work was great and that, among other things, made me want to draw Marvel Comics.*

CHIC: Well, I'm sure you're referring to **Jack Kirby's** work.

PAUL: *Yeah — but the inks were great. If you get a bad inker . . . sometimes Jack has had some inkers that were popular with the fans, but in my opinion I felt they didn't do Jack's pencils justice. Your inks had enough of your personality in it that it really enhanced what Jack was doing. It wasn't like somebody erasing whole backgrounds; it seemed to me that if he pencilled it then it got inked.*

CHIC: Well, thank you, Paul, for saying that — but I'd have to say that Jack's work is easy to ink. I think any decent inker could handle the job. In one word, his pencils are *terrific.* The man puts in everything that's needed and nothing more. That's important — most of the artwork today is over-embellished and over-complicated. I noticed today as I read the stories that I get lost in trying to figure out the artwork.

PAUL: *Simplicity is the key word. When I worked with Alex Toth in Australia he always said to keep it simple.*

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"On the subway to Brooklyn I would write a story."

CHIC: Jack had that talent of being simple and precise. As an inker I could enjoy every line in the pencils.

PAUL: *I want to touch on Jack Kirby a little later. Right now, I'd like to get back to what you did after your stint on CAPTAIN MARVEL.*

CHIC: I was doing humor, war . . . in the early '50s I was doing GEORGIE for Timely. It was a teenage character patterned very much after Archie.

PAUL: *You mentioned that you'd work on that in the subway.*

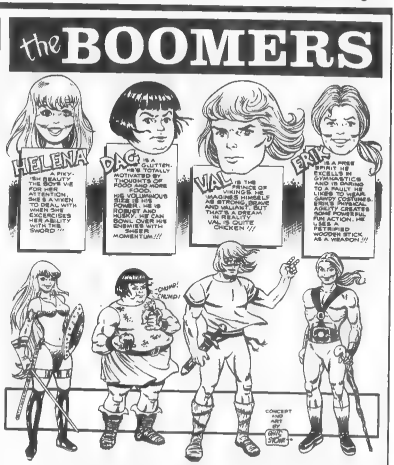
CHIC: Yes, on the subway from New York to Brooklyn I would write a story and then hand it to **Stan Lee.** By the end of the day he would either okay it or turn it down. It was a great way to make extra money while riding the subway to work.

PAUL: *Did you do any inking for Atlas back then?*

CHIC: Yes, I did. I was freelancing and worked for most of the publishers that were in business back then. I'd go around and show my samples, get assignments, and then go home and work on them. I'd take the finished assignments in, hopefully get new assignments, and pick up my check.

PAUL: *Did you ink any of Mike Sekowsky's work at Atlas?*

CHIC: No, not at that time. I met Mike at Timely when they were still in the Empire State Building. We had these little bullpens up there with four or five guys sitting in each bullpen. It was a large corridor with bullpens on the side. I was in one with **Al Jaffee, Sol Brodsky** and **Mike Sekowsky's** brother George; George was an inker at the time. We had a lot of fun and it was a pleasure coming in to work because the company was great. There were a lot of great names working in the bullpen back then. People such as **Gene Colan, John Buscema, Syd Shores,** and **Dan DeCarlo.** The list goes on and on.



From Chic's newest creation, THE BOOMERS, we have pencils & inks (above) and pencils only (below). Chic is far more than just an inker, folks!

PAUL: *What did you do next in comics?*

CHIC: I went up to American Comics and they gave me a crack at their Nemesis character, which I ended up doing for a couple of years.

PAUL: *I thought you did Nemesis after*

"Somebody told me there was another Chic Stone."

ALL THIS MARVELOUS ACTION WAS RENDERED
- PAUL & POWER - CHIC STONE
PART OF NEBULA LEARNS HE IS ADOPTED AND GOES TROUBLE WITH THOSE DATE TRAUMAS TOO
THE DUDE
HAPPY 75TH BIRTHDAY JACK KIRBY
JACK, THIS IS YOUR 75TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY - IT'S WORTH REPEATING!
AN OPEN LETTER TO JACK KIRBY
A HAVE "SAT" 3, TO COMIC-BOOK ART WHAT THE "SAT" 3 IS TO ACADEMIA. IT WAS AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE TO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH SUCH A MONUMENTAL AND MARVELOUS IT WAS TRULY A TOOLSHA HONOR COMICS BECAUSE YOU WERE THERE AND THIS YOUR 75TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY - THAT'S WHY A NEW GENE OF JACK FANS - TWO FOR THE WORLD TO ENJOY!
- A FRIEND BUT AND ADMIRATION
CHIC STONE '92

The teaming of Power, Stone and Rude — for the 1992 San Diego Comic Con program tribute to Jack Kirby.

your stint at Marvel.

CHIC: Yes, it was. I was doing work for DC. I'm roughly guessing at dates now, Paul. This was a long time ago. *(Laughter.)* I can't remember what I did last month!

PAUL: *I remember your work in FANTASTIC FOUR #28 but, before that, you had some work in the FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUALS with the villain pin-ups. You didn't sign that stuff but I could see your style. You did a lot of fine brush work on those pin-ups.*

CHIC: I did that on occasion. If the pencils called for it I would put that in.

PAUL: *I was talking to Shel Dorf the other day and he was telling me that you did the on-camera comic-strip work for Bob Hope in the film where he was a cartoonist. Was that your artwork?*

CHIC: Not that I know of! *(Laughter.)* I don't know where that information came from. You know, I was talking to somebody who told me that there was another Chic Stone in the comic-book business. I wasn't aware of it, though. Unfortunately, he passed away — so I'm it.

PAUL: *Well, you're the one I know.* (Laughter.) *I have to tell you, I always liked your signature! How did you end up at Marvel? Did Stan Lee give you a call?*

CHIC: No, I took my portfolio in hand and stopped at Marvel. At that time it was a one-man office and **Stan Lee** was there all by himself. He was looking over some **Jack Kirby** pencils. If I remember correctly it was an 11-page IRON MAN story. I told Stan I was looking for work and he said great, I had come in at the right time. He handed me the **Kirby** pages and asked if I would like to ink them!

PAUL: *There were three inkers who I felt were really terrific on Jack, outside of Joe Simon for that period, and they were yourself, Joe Sinnott, and Mike Royer. I felt you were the truest to Jack's pencils while still adding your own touches. You have a way of doing faces that is quite nice.*

CHIC: Well, thank you. I usually use the pen on the faces and brush work on the bodies.

PAUL: *That was a great body of work from 1963 to 1965. Jack was drawing nearly everything and you were inking everything he drew.*

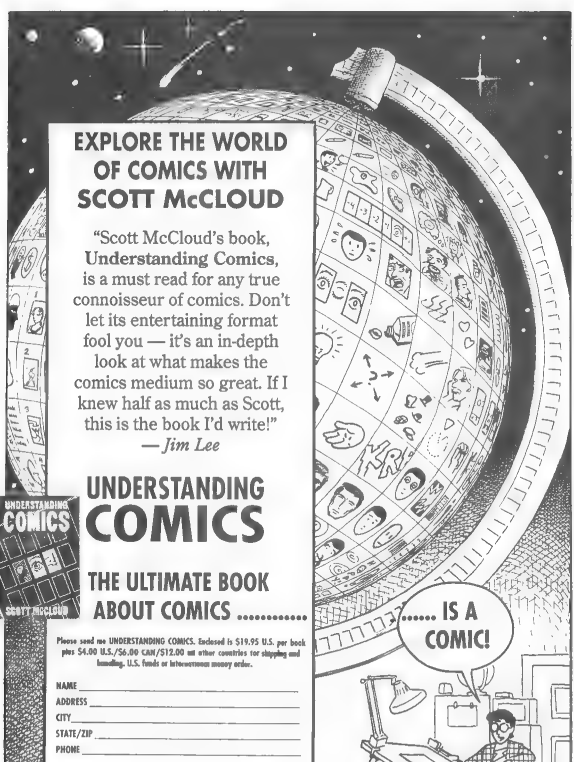
CHIC: I don't know that I inked everything Jack drew — but it seemed like they had me inking a lot of his pencils.

PAUL: *Did Stan offer you any other work while you were working for Marvel?*

CHIC: I don't think it was so much Stan offering me anything as much as it was working with various editors, later on. I would fill in here or there if an inker went on vacation or something like that. I remember **Jim Shooter** calling me up and wanting to use my inking style for the first issue of the first run of SHE-HULK. I did something like the first seven issues.

PAUL: *Stan Lee scripted the first issue, and the publisher of COMICS INTERVIEW, David Anthony Kraft, wrote the rest. Anyway, did you ever get to meet Jack Kirby?*

CHIC: Yes, I did, on two separate occasions. I may be jumping ahead, let me think. In the late 1960s we were doing IRON MAN, AVENGERS, CAPTAIN AMERICA, X-MEN, and FANTASTIC FOUR. I remember one evening at home the doorbell rang and there was **Jack**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"Stan sent a memo around saying everyone should

Kirby at the door with a 5x6-foot drawing under his arm and he said he wanted to talk to me about it. At that time I had a lot of company in the house so I suggested to Jack that we go down to the White Horse Inn and sit in the back so we could have more quiet. We went to this inn and he showed me this advertising. I think it was for NBC. It was advertising for one of the comic shows they were going to put on.

PAUL: *Oh, that was, I think, for CAPTAIN NICE!*

CHIC: I honestly don't remember. It could have been. I accepted the job from him to do the inking.

PAUL: *You know, I saw the original and I wanted to buy it — but the guy wasn't interested in selling it.*

CHIC: Where did you see the original?

PAUL: *I saw it at Forbidden Planet out in the valley. It's owned by Mike Lake, an English guy who runs Titan Distributors. He was going to sell it and then he said that it was really a neat piece. So like a dummy I said, "If I owned that I wouldn't sell it," so he didn't! It was a nice piece.*

CHIC: It really was a wonderful piece. During those years I got a call from **Gloria Steinem** and she wanted me to work on something for her. It was called COMMON MAN. It was for ABC television and she wanted me to make a presentation for her. It was a series about the common man and how he is a hero, an ordinary hero. I did the presentation for her and she liked it. Unfortunately, it didn't fly. I did about three weeks worth of work. I guess today you would call it a storyboard — which you're familiar with, Paul!

PAUL: *There was a period in 1965 where all of a sudden there was no Chic Stone. It kind of knocked me for a loop. I wondered what had happened to you. I then learned that you were over at American Comics. I remember seeing the stuff at American and I thought Jack was working for them! I saw the signature and realized it was your work.*

CHIC: You're kidding! That's very flattering to say that. I must have been very influenced by Jack's work after inking him all of those years. Of course, who wouldn't be influenced by his work?

PAUL: *How did the Nemesis character come about?*

CHIC: Well, **Richard Hughes** actually created the character and it was just a matter of him telling me what he desired in the character and I drew it with his directions. He seemed to think it was fine. I did work for CRACKED magazine. At that time **Sol Brodsky** was the art director for CRACKED. I bounced around a lot. There was a time, I think it was in 1954, when I went up to Connecticut and worked for **Vince Fago** for a while. At Charlton I was doing MY LITTLE MARGIE and MARGIE'S BOY-FRIENDS. That lasted until the flood came and wiped out Charlton. I went to work in the morning, sat down at my drawing table, and the Connecticut River kept rising until it took over the whole place. He had these four-color presses because he did all of his own printing. The place was totally wiped out. It was a very sad affair.

PAUL: *As far as I can tell, after you finished working on Nemesis you went over to Tower Comics.*

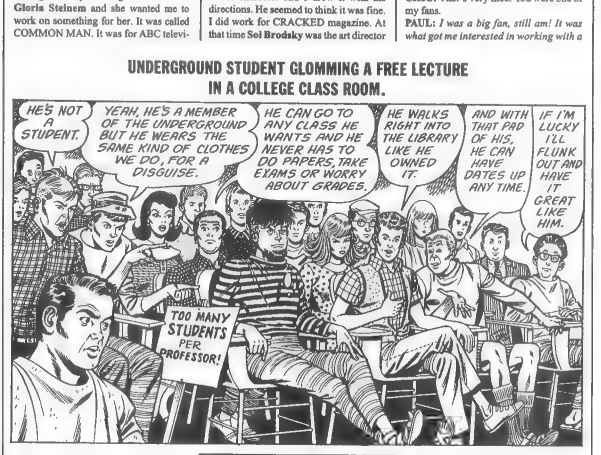
CHIC: Well, don't forget, I was penciling and inking for Archie Comics during those years, as well. I was going round and round and worked for a lot of companies. I basically worked for anyone that found my inking suitable.

PAUL: *I know that at the time you left Marvel I kept writing letters to Marvel asking Stan Lee to bring back Chic Stone.*

CHIC: That's very nice. You were one of my fans.

PAUL: *I was a big fan, still am! It was what got me interested in working with a*

UNDERGROUND STUDENT GLOMMING A FREE LECTURE IN A COLLEGE CLASS ROOM.


HE'S NOT A STUDENT.
YEAH, HE'S A MEMBER OF THE UNDERGROUND BUT HE WEARS THE SAME KIND OF CLOTHES WE DO, FOR A DISGUISE.
HE CAN GO TO ANY CLASS HE WANTS AND HE NEVER HAS TO DO PAPERS, TAKE EXAMS OR WORRY ABOUT GRADES.
HE WALKS RIGHT INTO THE LIBRARY LIKE HE OWNED IT.
AND WITH THAT PAD OF HIS, HE CAN HAVE DATES UP ANY TIME.
IF I'M LUCKY I'LL FLUNK OUT AND HAVE IT GREAT LIKE HIM.
TOO MANY STUDENTS PER PROFESSOR!

ink like Chic Stone. I wasn't liked much for that."

brush.

CHIC: I've been out of the field for so long that it's nice to know that people still remember the work I've done.

PAUL: *One of the reasons for talking with you is to get material documented from some of the people from the earlier days of the industry.*

CHIC: And I think that's great, because so many of the earlier artists are forgotten. The creators from the '30s, '40s, and '50s are falling through the cracks. They were very important people to the world of comics.

PAUL: *I think it's important to give that recognition, because being an artist is a lot of hard work — and it's lonely sitting in a studio working alone. Even when you were in the bullpen you saw the guys you worked with, but you had no contact with the fans. You knew the kids were buying the stuff but you never really had any contact.*

CHIC: That's so true. Publishers would get the fan mail and in some cases print it.

PAUL: *That was Stan. He really got the fans involved and he worked with the fans. He enjoyed the fans.*

CHIC: And a lot of those fans wrote in with a lot of good ideas.

PAUL: *It was good for the fans and it was good for the company. It was more like a family and creators were starting to get a little recognition. In those days the art wasn't credited unless the artists put their signature on their work. I remember Alex Toth telling me that at Dell Comics in the 1950s you weren't allowed to sign your work.*

CHIC: Exactly right. I did a lot of work for Dell and you couldn't sign your name. That always bothered me because I did some really good work at Dell.

PAUL: *I can only recall the two flying saucer books at Dell. Did you do any others?*

CHIC: Yes, I did a cowboy book. I think it was KID COWBOY or something like that.

PAUL: *You were telling me about Kirby's pencils, how you would get his pencils and you were afraid of inking the pages.*

CHIC: Afraid? No, I wasn't afraid. I would say that I was in awe of his work — I was in awe of a lot of his work! I would always sit down to ink his work with a great deal of confidence. Which was strange because in most cases I never felt that way about most pencillers. Jack's work just seemed to blend in well with my ability to ink it.

PAUL: *What did you think of his work? No one else at that time drew in that style.*

CHIC: Well, I think he is one of the greatest draftsmen living today in the field of comics. I think he's untouchable. No one can come near him in his ability to tell a story and do the type of characterizations he does. The man is a legend in his time.

PAUL: *Eventually, you came back to work at Marvel and worked for them in the 1970s.*

CHIC: I was working mostly with **Jim Sallerup.** I was doing three books at the time. I was very busy. Three books was something like 60 pages a month. I do believe at one time Stan sent a memo around the office saying that everyone should try to ink like **Chic Stone.** I wasn't liked very much for that. *(Laughter.)*

PAUL: *Alex Toth used to get upset when he was asked if he could draw like Alex Raymond. He would say, "If you want Raymond, why don't you hire Raymond?"*

CHIC: Exactly. You want to have a style of your own. You were busy doing your work from a variety of editors and sometimes a variety of companies. You were just so darn busy turning out work. It's difficult to recall all of the work that I've done over the years. You know, it's funny because I can look through some of the

UNDERGROUND STUDENT GLOMMING A FREE MEAL IN A COLLEGE DINING HALL.

YOU KNOW, YOU GUYS CONTROL THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE AROUND HERE.
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THEY CAN'T EXPELL YOU AND YOU HAVE ALL THE ADVANTAGES OF THE UNIVERSITY THAT WE PAY $2000 A YEAR FOR.
YEAH, EXCEPT A DIPLOMA.
DIPLOMA! WHO'D WANT ONE FROM A LOUSY PLACE LIKE THIS?
THIS FOOD IS ROTTEN HOW ABOUT SECONDS
CHIC STONE

"Recuperating from my heart attack I got a letter from

old Golden Age books still around and I see work that I've done. You remember all of the work you've done, it's just hard to recall all of it at a given time.

PAUL: *Earlier, you were telling me another interesting story that I'd like to share with the readers, concerning some of your later work for Marvel.*

CHIC: The last story I did for Marvel was THE INCREDIBLE HULK. I think it was with **John Romita Jr.** doing the breakdowns. Al **Milgrom** asked me to embellish it. He told me to put a lot of hash marks in it; a lot of detail. I did an ample amount of drawing, adding to backgrounds and such. I brought it back and Al was unhappy with it. He said I needed to do more backgrounds on it.

PAUL: *Did they use the artwork?*

CHIC: Of course they used it. I came back to Alabama and I was recuperating from my heart attack when I got a letter from **Jim Shooter.** The letter was basically two sentences long and it said something to the effect that, "Dear Chic, your services are no longer required by Marvel Comics. If anything comes up I'll let you know."

PAUL: *Wow! Unbelievable. That would have been 1984?*

CHIC: Somewhere around there.

PAUL: *So now you're retired?*

CHIC: Semi-retired. Sitting back, taking life easy. Watching the sunsets and the sunrises. Sounds dull, but I like it.

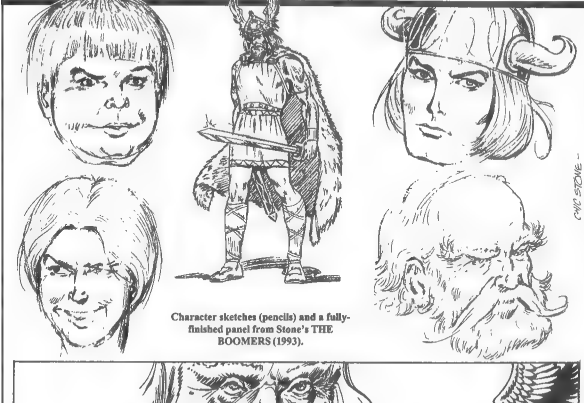
PAUL: *Are you still sketching?*

CHIC: Sure. Locally I'm doing some caricatures and they enjoy that.

PAUL: *Do you miss the comics at all?*

CHIC: Yes I do, but since my heart attack I really don't have the energy to sit at the drawing table as long as I used to. Unfortunately, the years do take a toll. I know some people 85 years old and they're jumping out of airplanes. I'm going to be

Shooter: 'Dear Chic, your services are no longer required.' "



Character sketches (pencils) and a fully-finished panel from Stone's THE BOOMERS (1993).

70 but I have no desire to jump out of an airplane.

PAUL: *Do you see yourself taking on the occasional comic-book job?*

CHIC: I would like to take one on once in a while just to keep a hand in it. I would love to do it.

PAUL: *I have to tell you that I'm doing some tribute stuff on the new Bob Newhart show, BOB. Bob plays a cartoonist and I'm doing the artwork. I'm on the show as well. You'll see some reference stuff in the show like the Kirby Stone Men. In the second episode I did a drawing that says "OUR FOUNDER" and I did it from a Marvel special back in 1963 that had a photo of everyone in the Marvel Bullpen.*

CHIC: I'm looking forward to that. **Bob Newhart** is good at everything he does.

PAUL: *He's very funny. He even came out and warmed up the audience with a stand-up routine which he wasn't supposed to do. Bob came out and did a new routine and really floored everyone. In closing, is there anything you would like to say, anyone in particular you enjoyed working with?*

CHIC: Well, I would like to say **Sol Brodsky** was one of the finest men I have ever met. Sol and I shared a studio together back in the '40s. We shared a lot of work and did a lot of work together, both commercial work as well as comics. He was enjoyable to work with and to work for. I'll remember him for as long as I live.

PAUL: *If you had the chance to do it all over again, is there anything you'd do differently?*

CHIC: I would go out to lunch with Sol as often as I said we'd have to get together for lunch. Years went by and we always seemed to only conduct business and chat a little. I wish we could go back and make the time.

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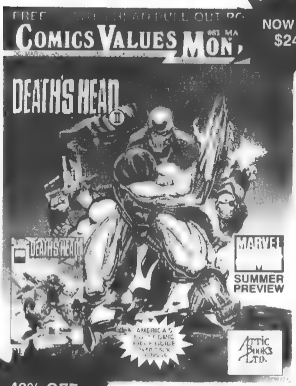

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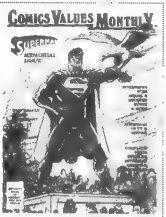

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"If I told you what I was paid for inking, you'd arrest

MIKE ROYER

Mike Royer has had an illustrious career as a cartoonist and inker working with many of the industry's giants. Mike has inked such greats as Jack Kirby, and was an assistant to Russ Manning for a number of years. Royer is now Manager of Character Art for Consumer Resources/Walt Disney Company Consumer Products.

PAUL POWER: *Let's talk a little about the period when Jack Kirby left Marvel for DC.*

MIKE ROYER: Jack had gone back to New York, quit Marvel, and went to DC to do his "Fourth World" stuff. He had gone with me in mind as his inker. Of course, **Carmine Infantino** wanted **Vince Colletta** to do all of the work in New York. That way they could keep their thumb on what Jack was doing. I went to New York in 1971 and went to talk to Carmine. Later in the day at lunch **Dick Giordano** told me that the only impression **Infantino** got was that I was a cocky son of a bitch! But I did walk into **Infantino's** office and I said, "Look, I can do a better job than **Colletta**, and if I have to I'll do it for the same price." Of course, Carmine didn't want me saying that about his closest friend.

PAUL: *Here we are kicking the dead, but the thing I couldn't stand about Vince was that he served a special purpose. I understand from talking to Steranko that if a book was late you better watch out because Vinnie was going to get you. I also know that in the '50s, to be fair to Vince, he was a very good inker.*

MIKE: I thought the work he did on romance comics was great. When he wanted to, he did great work.

PAUL: *I really thought that he destroyed Jack Kirby on the THOR work.*

MIKE: I can remember one of the first times I met with Jack, back when **Mark Evanier** and **Steve Sherman** were his editorial assistants. I was over his house and I was about to ink my first NEW GODS story and I remember saying, "This goddamn **Vince Colletta**, he can't even ink the damn costumes from one panel to another." That was when I found out that Jack didn't draw them the same from panel to panel! I felt that as his personal choice for inker that it was my job to do the fine tuning, to make sure the job was done right. Jack is marvelous — the greatest impressionist cartoonist comics ever had. As an impressionist you don't have to worry about those damn nuts and bolts things. Jack, in the first issue of NEW GODS, draws a scene where Orion has his left leg stuck in this huge clam and he's lying on his back. On the next page, it's his right leg and he's lying on his stomach. Jack's the only guy that could get away with it.

PAUL: *Did you ink it that way?*

MIKE: Well, what was I going to do? Anyway, the point is, some of the things I criticized **Colletta** for he wasn't guilty of.

PAUL: *There was an issue of JIMMY OLSEN I was thinking of . . .*

Mr. Royer's contribution from the '92 San Diego Comic Con program. Darkseid's son, Orion, wishes his *real* father a happy 75th birthday.

ORION (NEW GODS), KAMANDI, FLOWER, LIGHTRAY TM & ©1993 DC Comics, Inc. / THOR, THE DESTROYER TM & ©1993 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. / LORD OF LIGHT (the production) ©1979 Barry Ira Geller Productions

Infantino for rape. $15 a page. The letterer got $18."

BUT, 'TIS SEEMINGLY USELESS!
THE UNLIVING DESTROYER CAN FEEL NO PAIN!
SINCE HE BE NOT FLESH NOR BLOOD...
AND SO THE BATTLE CONTINUES TO RAGE...
...WITH THE DESPERATELY-FIGHTING THUNDER-GOD STILL UNAWARE THAT THE LIFE-FORCE WHICH IS WITHIN THE DESTROYER... BELONGS TO NONE OTHER THAN... THE GODDESS SIF!!
SO LONG AS BREATH ENDURES...
THOR BATTLES ON!
AND, BATTLE HE DOES... WITH THE VALOR OF AN ASGARDIAN BORN...
THOUGH MY PROWESS CANNOT SLAY THEE...
MAYHAP THE FURY OF ENCHANTED MJOLNER MAY GIVE THEE PAUSE!
HE HATH BEEN STRUCK WITH FORCE BEYOND COMPARE!!
YET, BEFORE MINE VERY EYES ...THERE STANDS HE STILL!

You be the Judge: Did Vince Colletta "destroy" Kirby's THOR? Pencil panels from THOR #152 (May 1968) — featuring the Destroyer, no less! Lettering by Sam Rosen.

MIKE: Well, I inked two, no, three issues of JIMMY OLSEN. Someone in New York was fixing all of the Superman emblems and Superman heads and I don't remember if Jack asked me to do it or someone in New York. At any rate, someone called and asked if they sent me the model sheets would I fix the "S" and the heads there? I said sure. Number one, as a purist, I didn't want anyone else changing the emblems and the heads because I felt it was more consistent if I did it since I was inking the book. I have a thing about consistency. I remember when I was inking **Paul Norris's** pencils on TARZAN comics. The editor, **Chase Craig,** said, "I want you to ink this as if you were inking **Russ Manning.**" I tried it for a few issues, but to me it was bastardization because the two artists don't draw the same and they don't think the same. It's like putting one man's inking on another man's forms — and it didn't work. My goal as an inker is to complement the penciller's work. When you look at the finished product you don't know it's inked by someone else. I've been successful a few times. Russ told me about the hundreds of letters they got bitching about my inking. That they wanted **Colletta** back.

PAUL: *Inking is like a good wine. What's a good wine? Either you like it or you don't.*

MIKE: Of course, if I told you what I was being paid for inking, you'd arrest **Carmine Infantino** for rape. I was getting $15 a page when I started. Hell, the letterer was getting $18 a page.

PAUL: *Damn, how much were they paying Jack a page?*

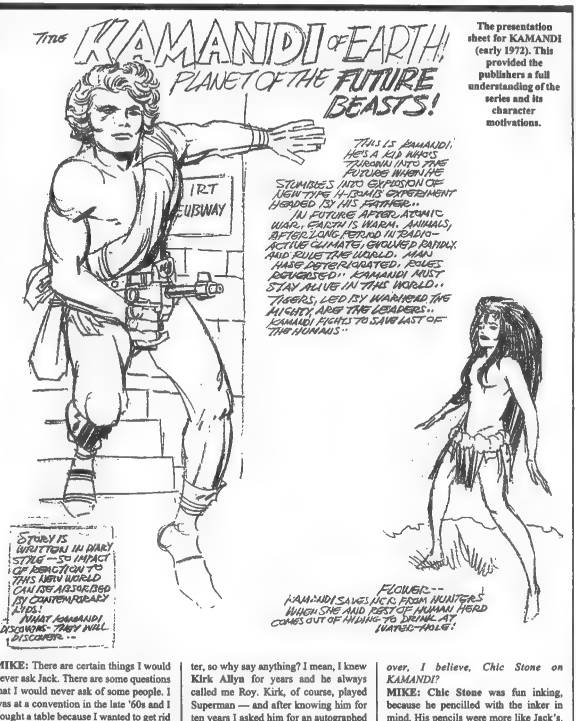
MIKE: I don't know. The last comic page I inked for Jack was, I think, SILVER STAR and I was up to $65 a page, plus lettering.

PAUL: *What was your relationship like with Jack at the time?*

MIKE: It was like being family.

PAUL: *What did Jack think about doing SUPERMAN and JIMMY OLSEN? I would never have thought he would work on that book!*

"Jack, academically, could draw better than his peers."


TITUS
KAMANDI OF EARTH
PLANET OF THE FUTURE BEASTS!
THIS IS KAMANDI. HE'S A KID WHO'S THROWN INTO THE FUTURE WHEN THE STUMBLES INTO EXPOSION OF NEW TYPE H-BOMB EXPERIMENT HOARDED BY HIS FATHER..
IN FUTURE AFTER ATOMIC WAR, EARTH IS WARM. ANIMALS, BETTER LONG REMAIN IN RADIO-ACTIVE CLIMATE, DEVELOP BRAINS AND RULE THE WORLD. MAN HAS DETERIORATED. APES REGRESSED.. KAMANDI MUST STAY ALIVE IN THIS WORLD..
TIGERS, LED BY WARHEAD THE MIGHTY, ARE THE LEADERS.. KAMANDI FIGHTS TO SAVE LAST OF THE HUMANS..
IRT SUBWAY
STORY IS WRITTEN IN DIARY STYLE -- SO IMPACT OF REACTION TO THIS NEW WORLD CAN BE ARTICULATED BY CONTEMPORARY KIDS!
WHAT KAMANDI DISCOVERS- THEY WILL DISCOVER..
FLOWER--
KAMANDI SAVES HER FROM HUNTERS WHICH SHE AND REST OF HUMAN HERD COMES OUT OF HIDING TO DRINK AT WATER-HOLE!

The presentation sheet for KAMANDI (early 1972). This provided the publishers a full understanding of the series and its character motivations.

MIKE: There are certain things I would never ask Jack. There are some questions that I would never ask of some people. I was at a convention in the late '60s and I bought a table because I wanted to get rid of some comics. **Joe Shuster** and his new bride came by the table and he finds a **Murphy Anderson** SUPERMAN comic and he looks at his wife and says, "This is one of my books." I wanted to say, "Joe, that's by **Murphy Anderson.**" You don't look at Superman's creator and say that. His eyes were bad and it was his character, so why say anything? I mean, I knew **Kirk Alyn** for years and he always called me Roy. Kirk, of course, played Superman — and after knowing him for ten years I asked him for an autographed photo. He started making it out to Roy and a friend corrected him. He apologized for calling me Roy for ten years. I said, "Hey, you don't tell Superman he's got your name wrong."

PAUL: *I recall a period that when Jack left DC to go back to Marvel you were still doing stuff for DC. You were inking over, I believe, Chic Stone on KAMANDI?*

MIKE: **Chic Stone** was fun inking, because he pencilled with the inker in mind. His pencils were more like Jack's. All I had to do was ink his pencils and have it look like something Chic had inked himself because his pencils were his statement. With **Keith Giffen** I didn't just ink his stuff. I did a lot of re-drawing. Keith never knew how to put ears on people so he just left them off. *(Laughter.)* He was trying to emulate **Kirby,** but in

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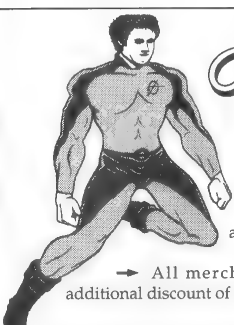

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"So many who tried to copy Kirby couldn't draw."

order to emulate **Kirby** one had to know how to draw first. Jack academically could, at one time, draw better than his peers. The more he got to be an impressionist the more it worked because he knew academically where the forms started from. How do you stretch a form that you don't understand?

PAUL: *This may be a minor point, but Jack was one of the few people that could draw biceps and triceps because he understood how they worked. Jack had an understanding of anatomy.*

MIKE: So many of the guys that tried to copy **Kirby** in the 1970s couldn't draw. When I tell people about drawing Donald Duck they don't understand when I tell them that they have to draw from the inside out. So many guys try to draw from the outside in. You take the clothes off and put the form of the character underneath and it's not there. If you understand the form you can stretch the form so that it makes sense. But you have to start with a form that has integrity.

PAUL: *When Kirby went back to Marvel did anyone at DC ask you to draw anything? Did you ask anyone to draw anything?*

MIKE: I was still concerned about keeping a certain amount of income coming in to maintain my standard of living. To pursue pencilling work would have meant that I would have had to sacrifice that. At the time work for Western was piece work so I could go back at any time. With Jack the work was piece work but there was so much that it might as well have been a contract. I either did all of it or I didn't do any of it. I wasn't in a position to take chances at the time. The reality was this was not the point in my life to take a risk; I cared about my family.

PAUL: *You eventually ended up inking for Jack back at Marvel.*

MIKE: But when Jack first went back to Marvel there wasn't a lot to ink at the time. They sent me a **Barry Windsor-Smith** comic and I inked one page of it. Marvel called me up and they said to send it back — that Jack only wanted me inking his stuff. I inked one page of "The Song of Red Sonja," and I defy you to find that page. It took me a day to ink all but one small panel of one page. Of course, **Smith** was pissed when it came back and *he* had to ink it, because he had pencilled it for an inker. If he had pencilled it for himself to ink he would have left out a lot of the detail, because he would have done the detail when he was inking it!

PAUL: *Do you have the art you inked?*

MIKE: Nope. I don't collect me.

PAUL: *Don't you wish you still had some of the Kirby stuff you inked?*

MIKE: The only **Kirby** pages I'd ever want in my collection were pages I never had access to. There's a page in the first or second issue of THE NEW GODS I inked — a full page with Orion and Light Ray on it. I was given a third of everything I inked for everybody, except for **Kirby.** Of course, **K**irby got everything back and over the course of our friendship, I got a few books back. I don't want to look a gift horse in the mouth, but the pages I got back didn't mean anything to me. I hope that makes sense. I was pleased with a few issues of the CAPTAIN AMERICA I inked. With the exception of Disney, everybody gets their artwork back, so there's just too much of it out there.

PAUL: *You worked with Steve Rude. How did you connect with him?*

MIKE: The reason I ended up inking **Steve Rude** was because **Mark Evanier** asked me to ink a piece he had pencilled. I knew Steve from conventions and one day, out of the blue, I received a drawing of NEXUS from him. I remember the year he won the **Russ Manning** award at the San Diego Convention — that was the year **Al Williamson** stayed at my place.

PAUL: *What were your first impressions of his pencils?*

MIKE: From an inker's point of view there was everything there you ever wanted to know. Sometimes, there wasn't. I remember on the MISTER MIRACLE job I was reminded that I once said that only a fool would put that much detail in and that only a bigger fool would ink it. Steve had done a scene at the circus and I remember a panel that was two-thirds of the page. Steve indicated how he wanted it inked and I inked the entire audience the way he requested. When I pencil for inkers I'm even a bigger fool because if that's what I want I will pencil it rather than leave it up to the inker to

The 25th page from NEW GODS #6 (January 1972) — one of the pages that Mike wouldn't mind having in his collection.

"Last time I was on a panel I was booed."

Mike inked this piece for Kirby — one of the set designs for the abandoned LORD OF LIGHT movie/park production, circa 1979. The precision of Mike's inking is truly evident here.

make the decisions. He indicated how he wanted the crowd handled, so it became my problem. I spent eight freakin' hours inking that one page. If he had pencilled it he would have seen that it didn't need that much detail.

It only bothered me because I was working ten hours a day at Disney and then inking at night.

PAUL: *How many pages was that job?*

MIKE: Gee, it seemed like 150, but I think it was only 40. All I know is that inking that MISTER MIRACLE job got me a good deal on some HOPALONG CASSIDY lobby cards three months later. I called a guy who had an ad for some HOPALONG CASSIDY stuff and he said my name sounded familiar. I asked if he read comics and he said only recently. I told him what I did and that the only recent work was MISTER MIRACLE. He said he was just looking at it this morning and he thought it was great. He gave me a great deal on the lobby cards.

PAUL: *You need to come to this year's San Diego Comic Con (1992).*

MIKE: The problem is rubbing shoulders with all of these people that I'm not familiar with. I'm not familiar with their work because I don't keep up with today's comics.

PAUL: *But they're celebrating Jack Kirby's 75th birthday! You should be on the Kirby panel — you did work with the guy, after all.*

MIKE: The last time I went to San Diego and was on a panel I was booed from the audience. I told the truth — **John Buscema** agreed with me privately, but not on the panel. He didn't deny what I said, he just didn't say anything. I was talking about the fanboy mentality at Marvel at the time where they wanted to fix everything Jack did so they stacked the letters page against him. Basically, every letter they printed praised the art but damned the writing. I happened to think that the audience Jack was writing and drawing for, the 12-year-old boy, enjoyed his work and every month picked up a **Kirby** book because they liked it. But the letters pages said they were stupid to like it because the writing sucked, so they stopped buying them and eventually Marvel said, "Jack's books aren't selling; we told you he wasn't any good." I said that on the panel and I was booed.

PAUL: *You know, even the young fans are picking up that Kirby stuff at conventions. The stuff was a lot of fun.*

MIKE: The audience that wanted to pick up Jack's work was a lot older than 12-year-olds, but they didn't want to admit that they were buying comic books. What's wrong with buying a kid's comic? What's wrong with writing a kid's comic? I realize the audience is different now, but we can write and draw comics for every age audience.

I'll tell you what, the last time I looked in a comic the stuff was so damn good it intimidated me. If I've learned anything in this business it's that it is never too late to learn, and it's never too late to be enthusiastic.

NEXT ISSUE: *Royer reveals behind-the-scenes stories of comics, including Russ Manning, Marvel animation, Dave Stevens, ROCKETEER, DARKWING DUCK, Bill Stout, Alex Toth, and Steve Rude, among others!*

An open proposal to publishers: Contact Paul Power, 3413 Maceo St. #3, Los Angeles, CA 90065

THIS IS PROFESSOR OM
HOW ARE WE GETTING OUT OF THIS ONE PROFESSOR OM?!?
DON'T WORRY I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING!
CREATED WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY PAUL POWER
INKING BY THAT GOLDEN AGE MASTER OF THE SABLE BRUSH...
ERIC STONE

PROFESSOR OM ESCAPED HIS HOME PLANET AGNON IN A FLYING SAUCER OF HIS OWN DESIGN WITH A TOP SECRET CRASH LANDING IN THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK.
FAB FEM.
THE PHOEF
WM. "BILLY" BLOCKBUSTER!
...WHERE HE IS BEFRIENDED BY THE BIDGEE FAMILY
OM IS BEING STALKED ACROSS THE UNIVERSE BY A GROUP OF KILLERS CODE NAME FULL TILT! FOR HIS TOP SECRET CARGO!
PROFESSOR OM IS A MASTER OF BOXING AND JIU-JITSU
BEFORE HIS FLIGHT FROM AGNON, OM WAS A WELL RESPECTED DETECTIVE, A MAN OF SCIENCE AGAINST CRIME AND THE OCCULT!
HE HAS A PASSION FOR ROMANCE AND ADVENTURE.
BELIEVE YOU ME HE'S GOING TO FIND ALL OF THE ABOVE AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

PROFESSOR OM HAS A TWIN BROTHER. HIS NAME IS RAM. HERE ONE OF THOSE BIG, SUPER HEROIC GUITARIST THINGS. A COSMIC GUITARIST THING. A JAMMING FOR ACTION!
HE'S THE
ROCK WARRIOR!
POW
GET DOWN!

WHO IS THE ROCK WARRIOR?!
OM
RAW WAS A SUPERIOR ATHLETE WHO UNDERWENT MAJOR EXPERIMENTS BY PROFESSOR OM TO ENHANCE HIS ALREADY CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH AND PROWESS!
UNKNOWN TO PROFESSOR OM SUBVERSIVE FORCES ON AGNON WANTED THE ROCK WARRIOR TO BE THEIR BEST INTERGALACTIC ASSASSIN!
YOU'LL LEARN ABOUT THE ROCK WARRIOR'S COSMIC GUITAR AND THE STRANGE CONNECTION BETWEEN IT AND AN ANCIENT BEAUTIFUL ALIEN PRINCESS WHO LOSES HER SOUL WHILE IN SEARCH OF THE LOST CHORD!
HMM?! NOW THIS MAY SOUND STRANGE, BUT, RAW CAME TO EARTH WITH THE IDEA OF PLAYING GUITAR WITH THE ROLLING STONES. HEY, IT COULD HAPPEN!
ARE THEY IN FACT ONE AND THE SAME?!?
THE ROCK WARRIOR KNOWS THAT THE FULL TILT FORCE IS AFTER THEM AND LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING, HE CAN'T WAIT TO RIP INTO THEM! SO WATCH OUT!

AN OPEN PROPOSAL TO PUBLISHERS: CONTACT PAUL POWER, 3413 MACEO ST. #3, LOS ANGELES, CA 90065

"The best fantasy has threads of reality to relate to."

TONY SALMONS

LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT — pencils and inks by Tony!

A few words about this guy — what a great talent he is! If he worked more and just let it rip at the drawing board he'd blow everyone in comics away. He is a bloke who understands and combines Kirby, Toth and Meskin all in one. I had a ripper of a time getting this Kirby tribute out of Tony and I hope you enjoy his zest as much as I did.

Among his first Marvel work was drawing an unusual and almost poetic Hulk story, by COMICS INTERVIEW publisher David Anthony Kraft, that appeared in MARVEL FANFARE #17. Did you know he did some work on the BATMAN cartoon show? Salmons will be illustrating an upcoming VIGILANTE series for DC. I wish Tony all the best and I can't wait to see his next efforts.

Take it away, Tony Salmons . . .

PAUL POWER: *We were talking about artists of the '40s and '50s and you mentioned George Roussos . . .*

TONY SALMONS: George Roussos, you mainly see him around the Marvel bullpen. He does mostly production work

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"Jack could do eight or nine pages a day. His pen-

STOP CRINGING, YOU SPINELESS TOAD!
THIS IS JUST A MODEL... THE EXPLOSIVE WILL NOT DETONATE!
A PITY THAT I CANNOT SAY AS MUCH FOR THE TONS OF NITROGLYCERINE SO CLEVERLY HIDDEN BENEATH ITS REAL-LIFE COUNTERPART!
YOU WOULD DESTROY THE ENTIRE VILLAGE?!
I WOULD SHATTER HALF A PLANET TO TREAT THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
BUT FIRST... LET US SEE HOW THE SECOND WAVE OF ROBOTS FARES...!
THEY'RE COMING!
I'VE GOT TO WARN THE OTHERS!
I SAW THEM! THEY'LL BE HERE IN SECONDS!
IS EVERYTHING READY?
HECK NO, IT AIN'T!
WE FORGOT TA BAKE A CAKE!
NOW CLAM UP IN DIT, IN HERE!

TORCH IN DISTANCE SPOTS 'EM COMING

THEY'RE HERE

A CAKE WITH TWO GADGET REED-- WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

cils were so complete it was hard to mess them up."

FOOL! THY STRENGTH IS IN THY HAMMER!
WITHOUT IT, THOU ART ULLIK'S HELPLESS PREY!
SEE! NOW THE GUILELESS GALLANTRY OF THOR SHALL CAUSE HIS DEATH!

Above and below: Pencil panels from THOR #152 — featuring classic fisticuffs between the Thunder God and Ulik. Previous page: Pencils for the 17th page of FANTASTIC FOUR #86. (No Colletta! No Sinnott!)

now and he colors a lot of covers. He has a sketchbook from the '40s when he was a kid. He used to do a lot of backgrounds for the studios. He had sketches from people like **Hal Foster.** We looked through the sketchbook and it was fabulous. He wasn't crazy about his inking from back then. Everyone knows George from his work with **Jack Kirby. Kirby,** as you know, could do eight or nine pages a day and they would hand George an entire book and have him ink it over the weekend.

PAUL: *He did a great job with it*

TONY: I thought so. Kirby's pencils were always so complete it was hard to mess them up.

PAUL: *Who were some of your favorite Kirby inkers?*

TONY: Joe Sinnott was the best. He was fifty percent of what THE FANTASTIC FOUR was. I think that was Jack's best work.

PAUL: *What did you think of the Colletta period?*

TONY: I didn't like it. When I was buying the comics as a kid, I liked the different approach he took with Kirby's pencils. Looking back now, I can see that **Colletta** was just lost and trying to make up for it. I actually liked the stuff Jack inked himself in the '50s the best. There were a few CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN and I think a few TALES TO ASTONISH were inked by Jack.

PAUL: *Was it pen or brush work?*

TONY: It looked mostly like pen work.

PAUL: *What did you think of Chic Stone's inking?*

TONY: At the time, I liked it. Now, I'm not as fond of it. I don't care for that dead, heavy outline he put around everything. Considering all of the inkers and things **Kirby** was through, I'd have to say Chic was one of the better ones. A lot of the stuff translated very well from **Kirby** to **Stone.**

PAUL: *As fast as Kirby drew, he never hacked it out. Everyone that inked him always comments on how complete his pencils were. Have you ever met Jack?*

THEN THOU THINKEST TRUE!
THE EQUAL OF ULIK THOR IS NOT!
EVERY WAY... I BE THY BETTER!
FOR, I BE ASGARDIAN-BORN!!
SIRED BY HIM WHO IS THE POWER ...AND THE WRATH!

"I've been going back to my roots a bit. The

TONY: Just at conventions, you know, to shake his hand and tell him how great his work is. He has such humility. I like that about the old guys, they're always so gracious and encouraging to everyone.

PAUL: *I agree with you. I've found that true when interviewing guys such as Johnny Prentiss, Stan Drake and Leonard Starr. They're great illustrators and they have a right to have big egos, and yet they're very gracious and nice.*

TONY: They're amazing and they're still enthusiastic about their work. There seems to be more of that among the comic-strip people as opposed to the comic-book industry. When **Dik Browne** was sick and couldn't do his strip, everyone pitched in to help make deadline.

I don't know, in comics in the past ten years, maybe the stakes are higher with all of the royalties and such.

PAUL: *It's such a drag, because there's room for everyone in the industry. It comes down to — if you do good work, you deserve the work, and you deserve the benefits.*

Let's talk a little about your plans for VIGILANTE.

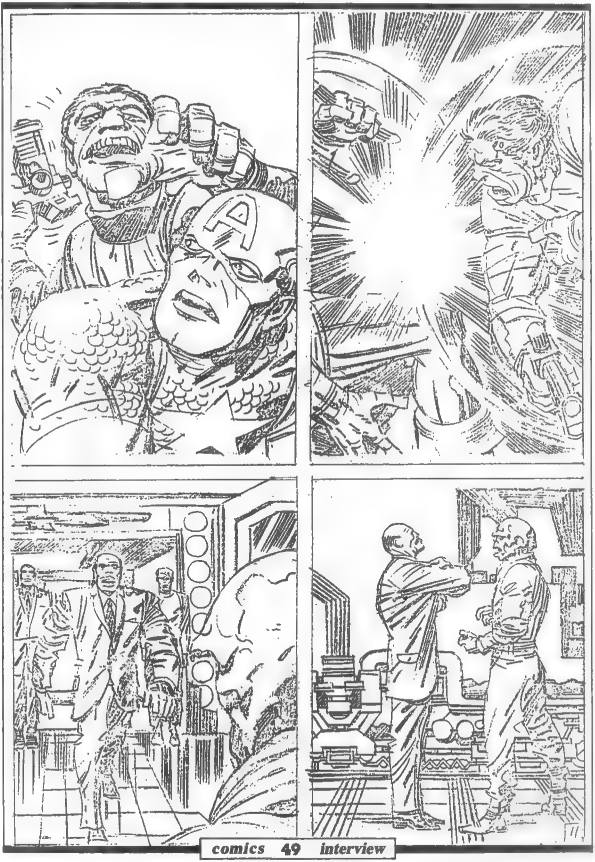
TONY: I've been going back to my roots a bit. The stuff I liked as a kid — the **Kirby** stuff. I liked the fun stuff that made comics great, along with a pinch of con-

Detail from Tony's splash in MARVEL FANFARE #17 — story by our own David Anthony Kraft — with the Hulk. This is a Hulk from the Kirby/Ditko school of Hulkery! Next page, pencils from page 11 of CAPTAIN AMERICA #101, featuring the Red Skull. Syd Shores later inked this page.

DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT
WRITER
TONY SALMONS
ARTIST
CHRISTIE SCHEELE
COLORIST
RICK PARKER
LETTERS
AL MILGROM
EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A DAY IN THE LIFE...

stuff I liked as a kid — the Kirby stuff."



"Kirby really understood how to draw, and

temporary grittiness thrown in. We want to impress the fact that the work is **Mert Meskin's** work.

PAUL: *There appears to be a parallel between Meskin's work and Kirby's work. Did you notice that?*

TONY: That was one of the things I talked to **George Roussos** about — there was the feeling that **Meskin** influenced **Kirby's** work.

PAUL: *Meskin's style really changed in the 1960s.*

TONY: You wouldn't recognize it. I'd really love to have some of his BLACK TERROR stuff.

PAUL: *Doesn't Greg Theakston have that stuff?*

TONY: If anyone does, he would! I was up at his apartment once and he had character sheets from BOY COMMANDOS that **Kirby** did in, like, 1946. I saw one page of BLACK TERROR reprinted in **Ron Goulart's** book. You could see **Ditko's** influence on **Meskin.** I understand that **Ditko** worked in **Meskin's** studio.

PAUL: *I see a lot of Kirby dynamics in your work.*

TONY: I consciously work on that. **Kirby** is a hard guy to take any influence from. **Kirby** really understood how to draw.

PAUL: *Kirby made everything look so easy.*

TONY: And I really don't know where he got that facility from — because it's really hard to find him swiping anything. I did find a few swipes.

PAUL: *For example?*

TONY: In FIGHTING AMERICAN there's three pages he lifted from a **Sheldon Moldoff** Starman, I believe. The rest of the story is very similar.

PAUL: *I know he consciously did a DEMON thing from a PRINCE VAL-*

THOR #258's original pencils. The finished cover has major head/face changes on the three main characters, but this is the Real Stuff!

it's really hard to find him swiping anything."

IANT, but that was a conscious thing.

TONY: I think the early **Kirby** stuff was when he was learning the basics and laying the ground work for what he was going to do later. He was incredible when he worked; you could find medieval stuff in THOR and also find 1920 cubism. Jack was incredibly eclectic when he worked.

PAUL: *And Kirby always made it work.*

TONY: On varying levels. If you were just a kid eating peanuts, drinking Coke and reading THOR, it worked. As you got older and studied the art form you could go back and see all of the form and style in Jack's work. It's like the levels in a Warner Bros. cartoon — it entertains kids and yet a parent can watch it and not go crazy.

PAUL: *I thought his CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN was his best art period.*

TONY: Yeah, and he worked with **Wally Wood** at the time.

PAUL: *If you were to work on a Kirby character, which would it be?*

TONY: I'm a child of the '60s, so THE FANTASTIC FOUR would be my dreamboat if I had to sail away on one.

PAUL: *Who would you like to have work on it with you?*

TONY: I'd like to ink it myself. I don't think there's enough healthy swiping going. There's a lot of incestuous swiping going on that causes the industry to implode with a lot of similar styles and techniques.

PAUL: *Well, when I swipe I always take the artist out to dinner, unless they're pissed off with me.* (Laughter.)

TONY: CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN would be a blast to do. But why would anyone want to mess with that stuff?

PAUL: *I remember seeing your work for the first time, some pin-ups in CONAN or something. I thought, "Who the hell is this guy? He draws like a son-of-a-bitch and yet he has the Kirby dynamics down." You have a nice flavor for the west so I'm really looking forward to the VIGILANTE stuff.*

TONY: Well, I was raised in the west and you always hate the place you're from until you go somewhere else. I like being from the west; it's a little more culturally austere. There's a more earthy, natural history from growing up in the desert.

I think rural westerners take a real bad hit in most popular culture because nobody references anything. They want the world but the writer or editor doesn't provide any reference material.

PAUL: *I think that's what the assistants should be doing. In advertising, they provide you with the material you need.*

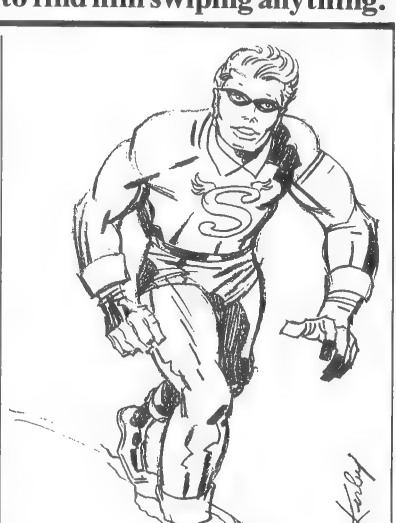
TONY: It takes a lot of time to gather references and the lack of references is what makes a lot of art bad.

PAUL: *And you don't get paid for that time.*

TONY: You just do it because you love your work. And some people are geniuses at it, people like **Michael Golden.**

PAUL: *Johnny Romita, Jr. mentioned that when he gets an assignment he takes a day off to go to the library to reference material. I know Reed Crandall used to spend up to a week to research material. Research makes the story more realistic and enjoyable.*

TONY: Pure fantasy, to me, has been boring. The best fantasy has touchstones or threads of reality which give you things to relate to. That makes the best fantasy.



Solo character sketch of Fighting American's sidekick, Speedboy.

"When Jack did pencils it was all there.

WILLIAM STOUT

EARLY MARVEL MONSTERS JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #

Character designs reproduced from the original pencils — just four of the dozens of visual monster creations that Jack Kirby produced during Marvel's pre-FF years. Next page: Thor vs. Mangog (THOR) #156) — Thor took over as the permanent feature in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY with the 83rd issue.

Jack Kirby

I first came in contact with Bill Stout in 1973 through Alex Toth, when Bill was doing work for Peterson's CYCLETOONS. I later drew Bill as a villain in my comic strip PROFESSOR OM . . .

PAUL POWER: *When did you first discover Kirby?*

WILLIAM STOUT: I remember Kirby's work in FANTASTIC FOUR #1.

PAUL: *You bought that off the stands?*

BILL: No, I was a DC fan at the time. The Marvel style was so foreign, so alien to me. It took me awhile to become accustomed to it. FANTASTIC FOUR #4 was the first Marvel I bought off the stands. I later picked up the older issues.

PAUL: *What intrigued you about the work?*

BILL: It was the characters and the way they were handled that really interested me. The characters were treated like real people with real problems.

PAUL: *You later worked on a Kirby comic. How did that come about?*

BILL: **Mike Royer** was inking all of **Kirby's** books at the time and he was under a deadline crunch, so he called and asked if I would help out. I spent a few days at Mike's house inking. I had a choice between inking KAMANDI or THE DEMON and I did THE DEMON.

PAUL: *You did mostly the backgrounds, right?*

BILL: I did everything but the main character.

PAUL: *What was it like working over Kirby's pencils?*

BILL: I was amazed. I didn't know he pencilled that tightly. It was all there. All we had to do was put ink to his work. That was when I realized how true the inkers were to his work. I saw that **Joe Sinnott** and **Mike Royer** were the most faithful inkers **Kirby** had. I felt other inkers really deviated from what Jack had done.

PAUL: *How do you feel about that? Should they have deviated or should they have stayed truer to Kirby's pencils?*

BILL: I think they should have stuck with what Jack did. Jack was such a great artist that when he did pencils it was all there. There was no need to deviate from his work and any deviation dilutes Jack's work.

PAUL: *Did it make you want to ink a complete Kirby book yourself?*

BILL: I always dreamed of doing that. The work on THE DEMON helped to satisfy that desire. Even though I didn't ink the hero of the book, I still did an awful lot of inking on THE DEMON. My admiration for Mike's inking also grew; he was very meticulous and had great control with a brush.

PAUL: *Was it Royer, then, that introduced you to Russ Manning?*

BILL: No, I was involved in **Edgar Rice Burroughs** fandom. A book **Burroughs**

JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY, THOR, MANGOG, FANTASTIC FOUR, SILVER SURFER, HULK, NICK FURY AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. TM & ©1993 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. / DE'MON TM & ©1993 DC Comics, Inc.

There was no need to deviate from his work."

THINE IMMORTAL FATHER... CURSED BE HIS NAME...HATH ANNIHILATED THE RACE FROM WHICH I SPRING!
A THOUSAND, THOUSAND WORLDS... A BILLION, BILLION BEINGS...GONE ...ALL GONE!
NOW THINK UPON IT, DOOMED ONE--!
THINK WHAT AN AWESOME PRICE MUST NOW BE PAID ...FOR THE MURDER OF MANGOORS BRETHREN!
THOUGH THE WORDS BE TRUE... THEIR ESSENCE, BE A LIE!
THEY WHO WERE SLAIN HAD THEM-SELVES BROUGHT DEATH TO A THOUSAND GALAXIES!
THEY DARED ATTACK HALLOWED ASGARD ITSELF ...AND, HAD WE FALLEN... THE COSMOS ENTIRE WOULD HAVE BEEN THY VICTIM!
THUS, MY FATHER, DID BUT END A LIVING CANCER!
EVEN AS I, HIS SON, NOW SHALL PUT AN END TO THEE!
SO BE IT!

"Producers have no idea what will work from a

THE SURFER'S RACE-- HAS USED POWER TO SEND INDY TO DIFFERENT TIME PLANE
HE KNOWS WHY FF WANT HIM-- THEY ARE RIGHT-- IF GALACTUS DESTROYS EARTH- THIS MICRO-VERSE WILL ALSO

First four pencil panels (of seven) from the last page of FANTASTIC FOUR 76 — featuring another appearance of the Silver Surfer. Next page: Bill's birthday tribute to Jack, from the 1992 San Diego Comic Con. It was by far the most dynamic piece created for the 140-page program book.

had written some years before was finally published, titled I AM A BARBARIAN. The first edition was illustrated by **Jeff Jones.** I didn't care much for the illustrations — so I did a bunch of my own illustrations using the style of artists I admired. I sent them off and they were published in an ERB fanzine. **Russ Manning** liked a particular piece and called and asked if I would like to work as his assistant on the TARZAN strip.

PAUL: *How did you like working with Russ?*

BILL: It was great! Russ was a fabulous human being. I learned a lot about art from Russ. It was Russ who turned me on to Japanese prints. He became exposed to Japanese art when he was stationed in Japan during the Korean War.

PAUL: *You worked on that JOHN CARTER OF MARS film — tell us about that.*

BILL: There's not much to tell. *(Laughter.)* I worked on it for a few months.

PAUL: *Will the film get made?*

BILL: I hope not! *(Laughter.)* It was the most miserable month I ever spent working on a film. And this was a project that I've wanted to do as a movie ever since I was 17 years old. They took everything wonderful in the **Burroughs** book out of it. Directors want to make films their own; producers, for the most part, have no idea what will work well when working from a novel. And rarely do they understand anything in the genre of science fiction/science fantasy.

PAUL: *I feel that as people who were once fans get into film and have some*

novel. Rarely do they understand science fiction."

SPECIAL BONUS — Just for COMICS INTERVIEW readers. Bill has wanted an excuse to ink this for years! This issue of CI gave him a perfect opportunity. Pencils: Jack Kirby, 1978. Inks: William Stout, 1993.

"When I met Jack I was amazed what a generous,

sweet person he was. Kind, caring with fans."

control they will have a truer sense of sticking to what makes the genre work.

BILL: It's not impossible. I think there has already been one John Carter film made, RETURN OF THE JEDI. If you look back at the film you have the Martian flyers and Princess Leia is dressed like Dejah Thoris. It's all there. That's another reason to not make A PRINCESS OF MARS.

PAUL: *Anything you're working on right now?*

BILL: I'm finishing up a cover for RAY BRADBURY'S CHRONICLES.

PAUL: *If you were at Marvel, what Kirby book would you have liked to have done?*

BILL: Gosh, Thor is the first character to pop into my mind, because of my love for mythology. I also like the mix of mythology and superhero.

PAUL: *It was during that period that I thought Jack was doing his best pencils. It was just a shame Colletta was inking.*

BILL: It was a shame. I also thought that THOR had a real operatic feel to it.

PAUL: *What were some of your favorite Kirby titles?*

BILL: I really like SGT. FURY! I enjoyed the humor in the book. The roughneck horseplay was great. I told almost all of my Marvel comics, but I saved all of my SGT. FURY, my Ditko SPIDER-MAN and DOCTOR STRANGE. I also saved my THORs.

PAUL: *You wouldn't have liked working on FANTASTIC FOUR?*

BILL: Not really. I hate drawing buildings. *(Laughter.)*

PAUL: *Do you recall the first time you met Kirby?*

BILL: Gee, I either met him at a convention or through **Mark Evanier.** I remember before meeting him that he got some work through me from Mattel. Mattel was asking me to do work and giving me Kirby stuff as reference material. I hated to talk myself out of a job, but I told them that Jack lived right in town. I told Mattel that Kirby created the material; he deserves to get the work.

When I first met Jack I was amazed at what a generous, sweet person he was. He is such a kind and caring person and very indulgent with his fans. His wife Roz is also very sweet.

One of the things that amazed me in inking THE DEMON was how well he could handle the quieter situations. You can see that in his romance stuff. You know he can handle the fight scenes and high-tech scenes, but when you can see his overall pencils, you see what a consummate artist he really is. He is a "fine art" artist. The artwork flows out of him and is really an extension of his being. He doesn't imitate anyone; it's all his style.

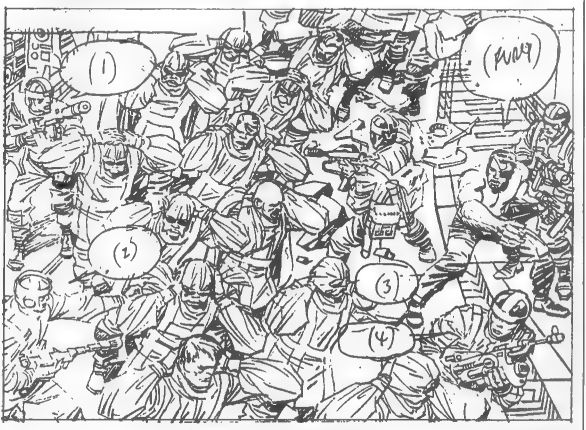
PAUL: *Kirby has really laid out a rich heritage before us.*

BILL: Just look at the long list of superheroes this guy has created. In Japan they have a "Living Treasures" program in which people who have contributed in a major way to the arts are taken care of for life, so they can continue with their work uninterrupted. If we had a program like that in the U.S., Kirby would definitely qualify.

PAUL: *Everyone I've talked to about Kirby has agreed that he is a true master and that he could have done anything.*

BILL: He did, he did everything. And no matter what he did in comics, he did it better than anyone else.

Large pencil panel from STRANGE TALES #141 (Feb. 1966) — pure 100% Jack "King" Kirby. 'Nuff said!



"When Lee said he created X-Men, he fleshed out

STEVE RUDE

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We last talked to Steve (the Dude) Rude back in COMICS INTERVIEW #78, when he was working on the WORLD'S FINEST revival with the retro look. It's no secret he's among Kirby's many artist admirers, and herewith we get the straight story . . .

PAUL POWER: *I remember five years ago when you came out to California and we went over to Mike Royer's house.*

STEVE RUDE: That was a long time ago — did we watch BLADERUNNER?

PAUL: *I can't remember. I do remember saying that Royer had a style like Russ Manning and that you guys should work together. What was the first thing you guys ended up doing?*

STEVE: The very first thing **Royer** and I worked on was for **Mark Evanier.** It was a back-up feature in some mini-series. It didn't go very far. It was for Eclipse.

PAUL: *Had you talked with Mike Royer before that?*

STEVE: Not really, a few letters here and there. The guy was a true professional. Everything he inked was perfect.

PAUL: *When was the first time, as a fan, that you encountered his work?*

STEVE: Kirby. The **Kirby** stuff. I loved his work. I just wish he wouldn't have inked every line **Kirby** drew, although I understand that was the way **Kirby** made him ink it.

PAUL: *Kirby got mad at him when he changed the Superman faces.*

STEVE: I think the thing about **Royer's** work was that he tempered **Kirby's** art. There was integrity in the art, although all of the inkers tempered the artwork. I just wish **Royer** had been able to do a little more.

PAUL: *What other jobs did you work with Mike on?*

STEVE: We did a MISTER MIRACLE that was our biggest job to date. And he was flawless on it. We still get compliments on that work.

PAUL: *And didn't you do the JONNY QUEST stuff?*

STEVE: Right, I forgot about that!

PAUL: *I think you twisted his arm for this next project. What is it, FOREVER PEOPLE?*

STEVE: NEW GODS. The guy I'm working with now, **Gary Martin,** is really good, and getting better. I think he'll adapt well to the **Kirby** mold. Gary has been waiting for a challenge and no one has even challenged him before.

PAUL: *He's mainly a brush man. Do you prefer that?*

STEVE: If you're going to ink **Kirby** you should be a brush man.

PAUL: *Is this next work going to be more like Kirby?*

STEVE: Yeah, more like **Kirby.** I was playing a tug-of-war with MISTER MIRACLE; I didn't want it to seem too much like **Kirby** because that would be silly. The promo stuff I did over the past few months turned out looking a lot more like **Kirby.**

PAUL: *The thing that works for me when you do Kirby is that there is real gravity to it. It's not just swiping something. Your strong sense of your own style is evident.*

STEVE: And that's important. I can't abandon who I am. To put in things that I feel are graphically wrong, just because **Kirby** did them; well, I just can't do that.

To analyze **Kirby's** procedure is my goal. When I did the MISTER MIRACLE I got a lot more into the evolution of **Kirby's** style. When I do NEW GODS you're going to see **Kirby's** style in the form of everything he evolved into. So I think a little bit of the **Joe Simon** in him will come out as well.

characters. Kirby created the concept. I'm sure of it."

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One of Steve's favorite Kirby creations, Mister Miracle. Here, for the first time anywhere, the unused original cover for MM's 10th issue — complete with Mike Royer's inks and the raw pencils. The cover as it was used is above.

PAUL: *Chic Stone mentioned seeing Kirby in the late '30s and early '40s when he worked at Eisner and Iger. The thing about talking to the older guys about Kirby was that he was always the "King." He was always a hot guy! Even Alex Toth said the same things about Kirby!*

STEVE: Wow! **Toth** was praising **Kirby**! That's amazing. **Kirby** is incredible. My goal is to not just limit myself to his style from the '60s. I'm getting more and more into his older art, from during the FIGHTING AMERICAN period.

PAUL: *Kirby was just full of ideas. I saw Stan Lee on TV the other night and he said he created the X-Men. Maybe he had something to do with it, but it would have been nice to have heard some mention of Kirby.*

STEVE: The more I hear about it, the less I want to believe **Stan Lee** for anything. **Kirby** was the ideal guy. When **Lee** said he created the X-Men, he fleshed out the characters; **Kirby** created the concept for it. I'm sure of it. Just like **Kirby** invented all the other concepts. This guy had been in the business for 20-some years before Stan got hot with Marvel. That's what **Kirby** was all about, he was a concepts guy. He didn't just draw it, he thought it up.

PAUL: *I have a lot of the original art and you can see Kirby's writing in the margins. Even stuff he just laid out.*

I have SGT. FURY & HIS HOWLING COMMANDOS #13, with Captain America in it and it's fabulous. There's an English pub scene that is perfect.

"Kirby paints as well as he draws?"

Perfect because Jack was there and he drew it from memory. The guy must have a photographic memory.

STEVE: Kirby's a genius. That covers it all.

PAUL: *What else are you working on?*

STEVE: With **Royer?**

PAUL: *Just anything.*

STEVE: Well, I did want to mention that I think Mike is way too hard on himself.

PAUL: *He's getting easier on himself; he's starting to relax.*

STEVE: And it will eventually show through in his work.

PAUL: *I think that age 50 we'll find out that Royer isn't just an inker. As he was saying, he would normally like to ink this story that you and Evanier are going to do, but the thing is that he says he's a penciller now. But he's still going to ink a few pages for me, damnit!*

STEVE: I think the only way we could lasso him into it is to convince him how important this project is.

PAUL: *Just how important is it?*

STEVE: It's very, very important! This series is the last hurrah for THE NEW GODS.

PAUL: *Really?! Is this with Jack's blessing?*

STEVE: No, I don't think it's with Jack's **blessing.** Jack knows about it, certainly — but it's just what **Evanier** and I have planned.

PAUL: *Does he agree with it?*

STEVE: It's hard to say. When you throw something past **Kirby** he can say whatever he wants to.

PAUL: *Will you be painting covers?*

STEVE: As you know, **Kirby** paints as well as draws and he is a genius at it. I'm also analyzing the way in which he paints. He takes blocks of graphic shapes and puts colors on them and that composes his work. Like everything else, he defies any kind of logical manner of color toning in his work and makes it work. It's just the greatest stuff ever done.

PAUL: *It's like Mike Royer said, you have to understand that Kirby started as a strong craftsman, a master among his peers in his own time, and he went on to become more surrealistic. You have to temper his work — and understand it, at the same time. In my opinion, some people ruined the guy's work. I wonder how he felt about that, because the guy never says anything bad about anyone.*

STEVE: Who do you think **Kirby's** best inker was?

PAUL: *My favorite? It was when I was a kid and I bought AVENGERS #2 off the rack. I liked the dynamics on that. I have to say that Chic Stone was Kirby's best inker, followed by Joe Sinnott and then Mike Royer. I also liked Frank Giacoia.*

STEVE: I think **Giacoia** was my personal favorite, but **Sinnott** was equally good. Actually, I think Jack was his own best inker. The reason I saw that is because I was over at his house and I saw some pieces that I had never seen before. They were marvelous. I asked who inked them and Jack said he did. It was some work from back in the '60s. It was some of **Kirby's** throw-away stuff . . . a character that threw missiles. *(Laughter.)*

PAUL: *Who were your favorite Kirby characters?*

STEVE: The New Gods. The thing I remember about **Kirby** in the '60s, from my kid perspective, was that he was the only artist besides **John Romita** that I liked. I liked **Romita** because he could draw Spider-Man better, academically. You know, I can say that I owe my career to **Kirby.**

PAUL: *Me, too! You know, I thought it would be great to get Kirby on the BOB show!*

STEVE: Wouldn't that be great — you have to do that! Imagine **Newbart** meeting **Kirby!**

PAUL: *I'd love to have Kirby walk on the show as Kirby. Have him delivering some art pages or something. I've already mentioned the idea and they seem to like it.*

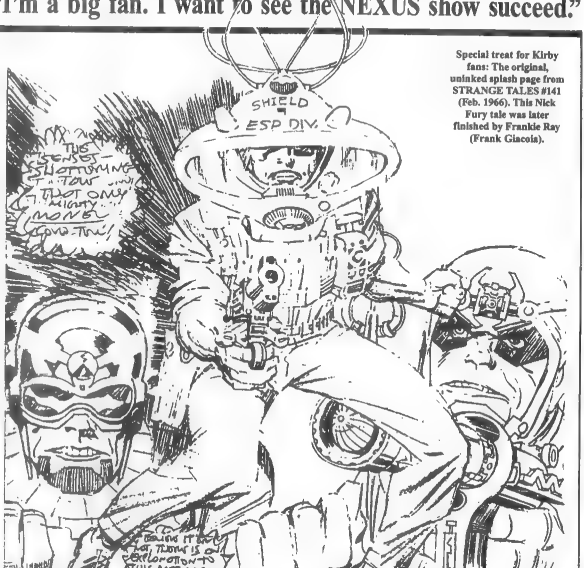
STEVE: Hey, **Kirby** won't be around forever. It would be great for him to be on BOB.

PAUL: *Comics are becoming big business with films and TV shows. How do you feel about the BATMAN animated*

Son and father face off: Orion vs. Darkseid. Inked by long-time FF inker Joe Sinnott.

Original pencil page from CAPTAIN AMERICA #101 (May, 1968), page 10. This is but one of the 147 pages of Cap that were eventually inked by Syd Shores.

"I'm a big fan. I want to see the NEXUS show succeed."



Special treat for Kirby fans: The original, uninked splash page from STRANGE TALES #141 (Feb. 1966). This Nick Fury tale was later finished by Frankie Ray (Frank Giacoia).

series?

STEVE: I like it. It has vision.

PAUL: *You know they've done like 50 or 60 episodes already.*

STEVE: That many?

PAUL: *That's what Len Wein told me the other day. You figure with money made on movies and merchandising on BATMAN, even if 50 BATMAN cartoons died, they haven't lost any money. And Bob Kane is singing all the way to the bank with DC. Let's just say that Bob was lucky to have a lawyer in the family.* (Laughter.) *That is the difference between Kane and, say, Simon & Kirby, who had a deal on CAPTAIN AMERICA that they were shuffled out of.*

STEVE: You mentioned that story before.

PAUL: *Well, what I heard was that one turned on the other and that Simon was trying to sell their rights to CAPTAIN AMERICA to Marvel. When Simon walked he got a payoff and one cancelled the other so there were no future payments. The original deal called for royalties from the company.*

What's going on with the NEXUS cartoon?

STEVE: We have a deal pending. I guess that's the word for it. I and everyone else wants something of substance to be on TV. Something that you can look forward to week after week.

PAUL: *The question is, who's going to produce it? You can have great stuff, but if it's done by a shit-ass outfit, it'll turn into a shit-ass film.*

STEVE: No argument there. We're all trying to bite our lips. *(Laughter.)* I'm a big fan. I want to see the NEXUS show succeed.

PAUL: *What do you think will happen with comics in the next few years?*

STEVE: I want things to change, and the trend is already being set with comics and animation.

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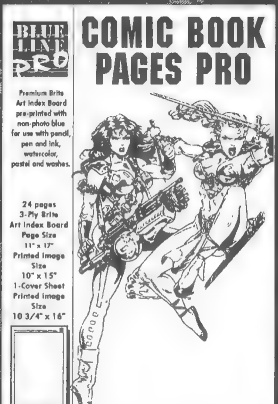
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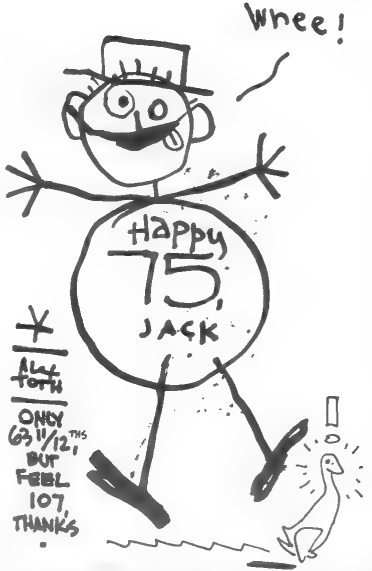
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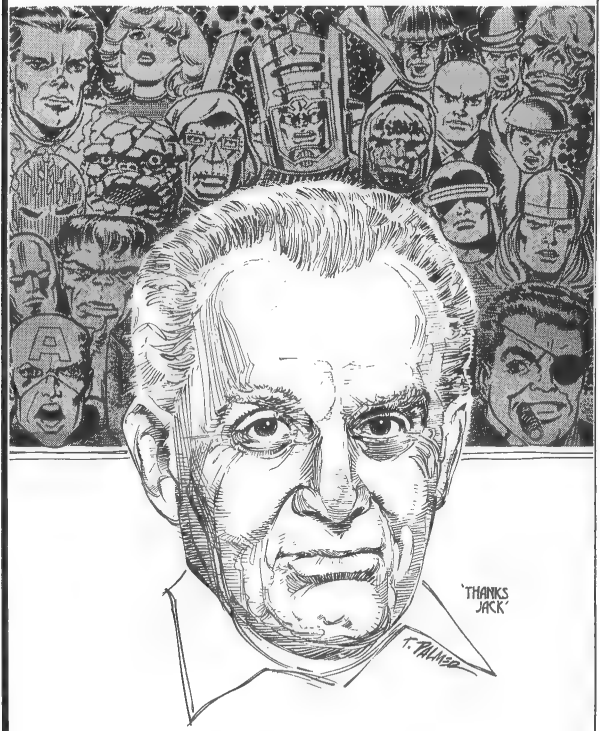
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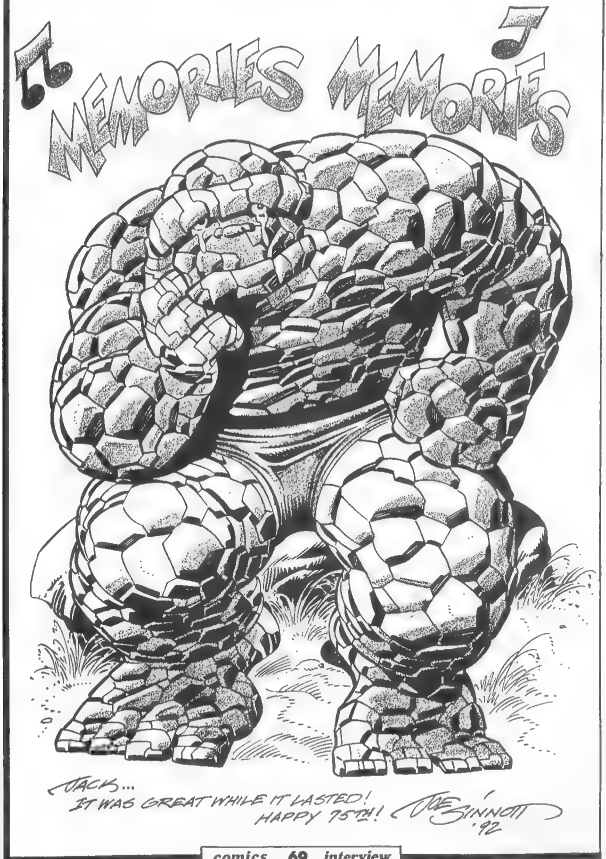
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LAST WORD

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A MILLION HERE, A MILLION THERE . . .

Julia Mather:

Thanks to COMICS INTERVIEW #119 and **Charles Novinskie** for the neat interview. Correction: On page 110 "*Timely* gave me a contract for nearly $1,000,000 in 1972 . . ." etc. should have been *Pendulum*.

Thanks . . .

Vince Fago
Bethel, VT

OF VIRGIL, CICERO — AND COMICS INTERVIEW

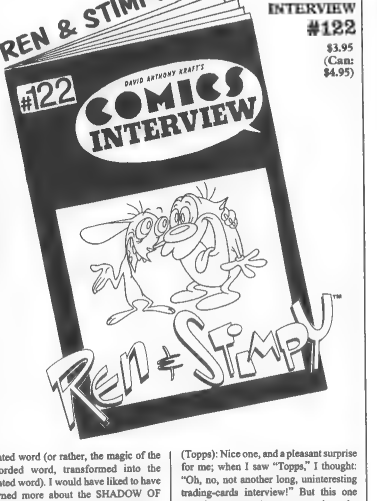
Dear DAK:

Have you ever read a book STARTING FROM SCRATCH, by **Rita Mae Brown**? The subtitle is "A Different Kind of Writers' Manual" — and, boy, is it! I was amazed. The only thing I knew about **Ms. Brown** is that she wrote a novel, RUBYFRUIT JUNGLE, which was some kind of counterculture hit in the '70s, so I expected some kind of Space Cadet's guide on How to Write Good. The woman is, much to my surprised, very deeply grounded in Western literature (I mean, the literature of Western civilization, not what *I* write), and her book is sort of the Marine Corps Boot Camp of writing books. For one thing, she demands — not just recommends— that the aspiring writer learn Latin well enough to read **Virgil** and **Cicero** in the original language. That's just for starters. Then she has a recommended reading list — actually, it's required reading — that starts out with the seventh century's "Caedmon's Hymn" and then goes all the way up to 1981 and consists of about three hundred titles (one of which, THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE, could take a lifetime in and of itself) — and the list is designed to be read in order so that the writer can see how the language evolved starting with rude Anglo-Saxon and then developing with the arrival of Norman-French via **William the Conqueror**, and then improved by **Chaucer**, etc., etc. But I bet she's never read COMICS INTERVIEW! Which brings me to:

CI #114: **Brian Stelfreeze:** One of the most enjoyable interviews I've read in the past year's issues. What I responded to was **Stelfreeze** himself; he seems awfully intelligent and likeable, and this interview gave me the opportunity to hang out with him, in a sense, via the magic of the printed word (or rather, the magic of the recorded word, transformed into the printed word). I would have liked to have learned more about the SHADOW OF THE BAT series, and what distinguishes it from the other BATMAN books, but maybe that was covered in an issue I missed.

George White: Not very interesting to me. A shorter piece on trading cards might have been okay but this was far, far more about trading cards than I would ever want to read. But you know your market; maybe there's a big segment of the comic-book fan crowd that also loves trading cards. Judging by the Marvel Masterpieces ad on the back cover, I guess that's the case. Who *are* these fans with so much money to sink into comics *and* trading cards? Whatever jobs they have, I could use one that remunerative.

CI #115: **Len Brown & Gary Gerani** (Topps): Nice one, and a pleasant surprise for me; when I saw "Topps," I thought: "Oh, no, not another long, uninteresting trading-cards interview!" But this one was fun because it concentrated on the human side of the trading-cards biz, with some interesting historical tid-bits as well. I remember those TRIPLE NICKEL BOOKS they mention, and had one, a Hardy Boys knock-off that I recall enjoying. Even now, reading the interview, I regret that I was never able to get the one about **Davy Crockett**. As a Brooklyn boy, I was proud to learn that, like the Jehovah's Witnesses and Murder, Inc., Topps has its home office in Brooklyn. Does anyone remember a series of "famous pirate" trading cards? I was thinking of them when I was reading about Topps' Civil War cards, mentioned in the interview. **Brown & Gerani** aren't whistling Dixie about the Civil War cards



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being bloody; I can pretty clearly recall one of a soldier — Union Army, I think — being impaled on what I believe is called a *cheveaux-des-frises* (French majors, correct me), a group of sharpened stakes meant to stop or impede a cavalry charge, with one of the stakes sticking out the middle of his back with blood all over it. Just the kind of history lesson any sadistic little boy would enjoy! (But I'm shocked, yes shocked, to learn that some of those fights were invented!) Anyway, the pirate series was another weird and gory set of cards, with all kinds of neat fight scenes, almost always focused on the spectacle of a cutlass entering a man's chest and coming out his back, or *vice versa*, always with blood dripping from the blade. There was one I recall with particular clarity, of a group of pirates hanging a man from a yardarm — *and* (as a bonus for the kids, no doubt) sticking a cutlass in him, with the point sticking out his back, etc. What strange beings created these things!

David Mazzucchelli: Not bad, but a real shortie. Would have liked to have learned more about **Frank Miller's** Christian imagery. You know what they say: Once a Catholic, etc.

Jim Salicrup: Wasn't there some mistake? Instead of putting the **Salicrup** interview under the category "Editor-in-Chief," shouldn't you have run it under the rubric "Scoffmeister?" Seriously, though — good interview. I remember my one extended conversation with "Sgt. Scoff" when I was working for you, and how I enjoyed it, and this interview conveyed the qualities of unpretentious common-sense and perspicacity that I remember from that phone conversation. I certainly second his remarks about how conventional wisdom will say "science fiction doesn't sell" or "westerns don't sell" until a STAR WARS or an UNFORGIVEN comes along and sends conventional wisdom packing.

Mike Friedrich: Nice to "hear" from him again. I remember you ran a lengthy interview with him in one of your early issues, and I think it was one of the first interviews I edited for you. As you may recall, I remarked that I hadn't been expecting a business-oriented interview to be interesting, but it was; and so was this one. But what's with this **Mark Borax?** Wasn't he my successor? Is he some kind of liberal? After shotgun-toting libertarian **Bill Chadwick,** did you bring him in as a total change of pace? I'm referring to his remarks and questions about violence, in the **Friedrich** interview. Like most liberals he seems to have completely missed the difference between a violent act committed in self-defense, or the defense of others (e.g., Spider-Man beating up on gangsters), and an act of aggressive force (e.g., the gangsters beating up Aunt May). I wonder if this confusion is based on the fact that what passes for "liberalism" in the USA (and is actually an American version of European socialism) is based on coercion, and this weird pacifistic streak in most liberals (weird, in that it doesn't square with their overall coerciveness) is some kind of denial of their own proclivities to use force.

That's all for now, kids, and remember: "If guns are outlawed, how are we going to shoot the liberals?" (Taken from a bumper sticker.)

Unarmed, still dangerous,

Bill Chadwick
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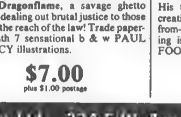

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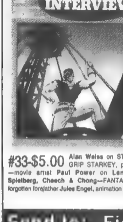

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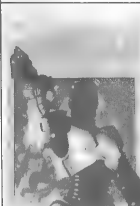

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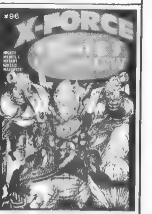

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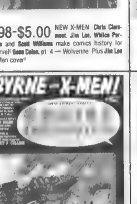

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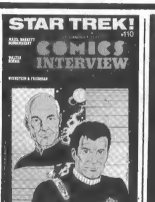

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